

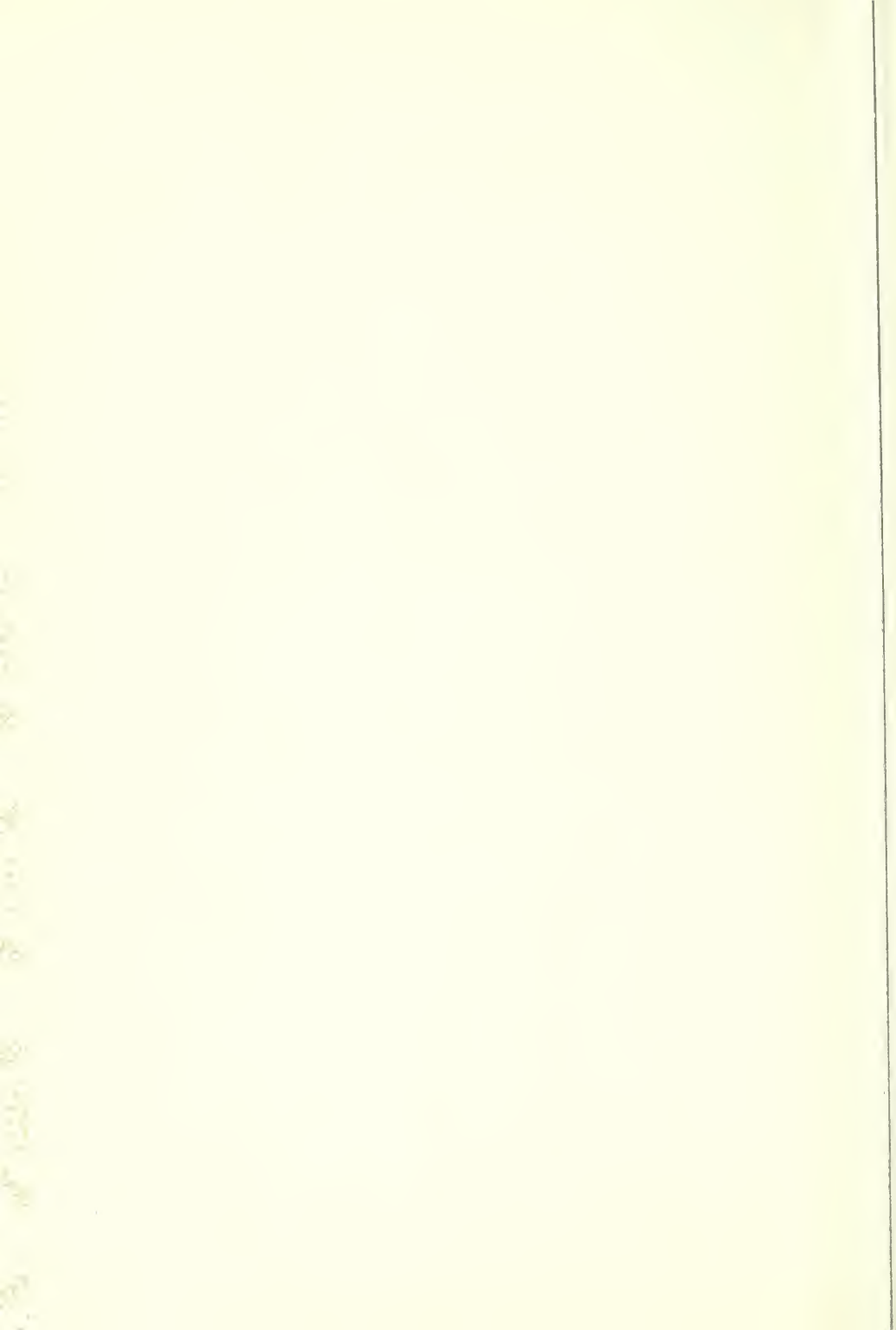
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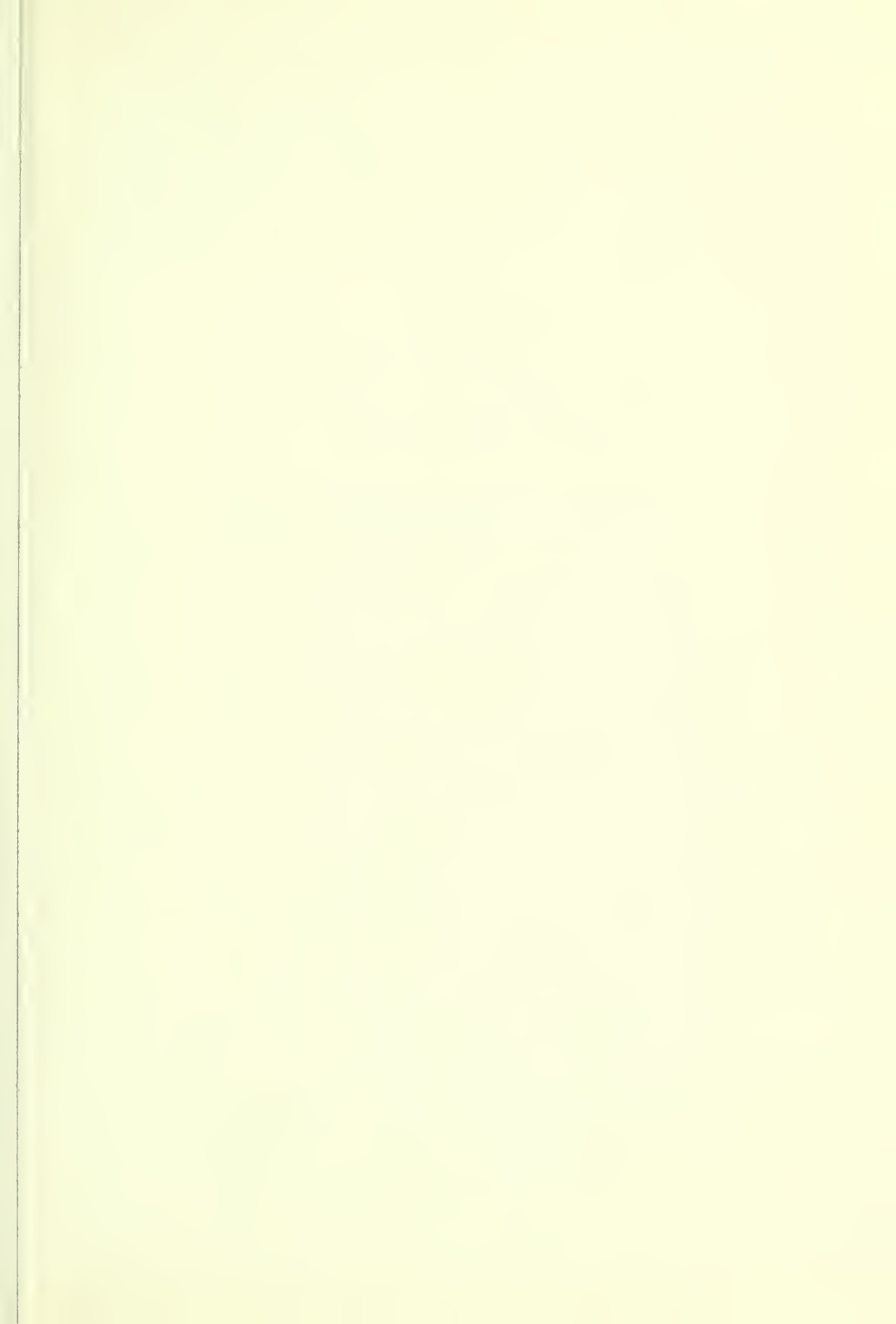
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# OLD PROVIDENCE



ROYAL C. TAFT



*President of The Merchants National Bank  
of Providence for Forty Years. 1868-1908*





# Old PROVIDENCE



A Collection of Facts and Tra-  
ditions relating to Various  
Buildings and Sites of  
Historic Interest  
in Providence



*With Illustrations*

*Printed for*  
THE MERCHANTS NATIONAL BANK  
OF PROVIDENCE

Providence, Rhode Island  
TO COMMEMORATE ITS CENTENARY

1918

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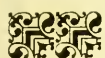
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no 1



# Introduction



THE century mark is a notable period in the history of a bank. Because this is so, and because Providence is rich in history and tradition, The Merchants National Bank of Providence presents *Old Providence*. The object in publishing this brochure has been threefold. Aside from the personal interest which the Bank has in marking the hundredth anniversary of its history, the city of Providence itself has been considered, and the purpose kept in view of giving credit to it where credit is due. The patrons of the Bank, it was thought, would appreciate the memorial; and other readers throughout the country have also been considered,—readers who take pride in the traditions and early history of New England. *Old Providence* is by no means intended to be the first and last word on the subject. It may do its part if it paves the way to a more extensive treatment of the material. The data have been made as nearly correct as the disagreement of historians and the various traditions have allowed.

In commemorating this century of notable service, some facts concerning the history of the Bank may be of interest. The constitution of The Merchants Bank was adopted February 10, 1818, it received its charter as a state bank eight days later, and business was commenced May 20 of the same year. The first directors were William Richmond, 2d, Andrew Taylor, Gravener Taft, Peleg Rhodes, Truman Beckwith, Samuel N. Richmond, Randolph Chandler, Stephen H. Smith, Joshua B. Wood, Charles Potter, George S. Rathbone, Charles S. Bowler, Nathan Tingley.

The Bowen estate, east of the Market House, was purchased in May, 1818, by The Merchants Bank. In April, 1824, a brick store at No. 6 Market Street, west of the Union building, was purchased, and on February 27, 1827, it was voted that "arrangements be made to have the Bank removed to the north-west end of the Union building as soon as it is practicable—to be located on the lower floor." After the appointment on January 15, 1855, of L. P. Child and S. N. Richmond as a committee on "building, or altering the building," a special meeting was called the following March to consider the erection of a new structure. In the same month, Sampson & Angell were appointed the carpenters to superintend the work, and S. Mauran, 2d, was added to the Committee on Construction. F. P. Durfee was given the ma-

## INTRODUCTION

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sonic work. Morse & Hall were the architects. The Fall River Iron Works building was occupied by The Merchants Bank while the new building was being erected. This third home, at 20 Westminster Street, the Bank occupies at the present time.

The capital stock of the Bank in 1818 was \$300,000, divided into shares of \$50, payable in specie. In 1850 the capital stock was increased to \$1,000,000, at which sum it has ever since remained.

It was voted, January 21, 1837, to "accept in behalf of said Bank our proportion of Public Money in Deposit under the provisions of the act of the general assembly passed in October last entitled: 'An act to provide for the disposition of our proportion of the money of the United States to be deposited with the state, by virtue of an act of congress entitled—an act to regulate the deposits of the public money approved June 23, 1836, and to provide for the appropriation of the interest arising from said money.'" For many years, in conjunction with the National Bank of North America, The Merchants National Bank was a clearing-house. It was for some time the sole depository of the city of Providence.

The Merchants National Bank, during the century of its existence, has had five presidents. Of these executives, the longest in office was ex-Governor Royal C. Taft, who was president for more than forty years. Mr. Taft began his administration not long after the close of the Civil War, and from 1868—year by year—he watched the growth of the Bank, and, in passing on, left it in fine shape for the new century which was shortly to dawn on its history.

Mr. Taft died in Providence on Tuesday, June 4, 1912, in his ninetieth year.

Quoting from a former publication: "The Merchants Bank was established by representative business men of the time." One familiar with the history of Rhode Island by looking through the list of names of men who have served this bank as directors for the past century will find that those who succeeded the first board of directors were also representative men of their time, men very closely identified with the manufacturing and commercial interests of the city and State.

The Merchants Bank was reorganized as a national bank, April 24, 1865; its corporate existence was extended, April 24, 1885, and re-extended, April 24, 1905. Its history in figures to April 24, 1905, the date of the last extension of its corporate existence, and February

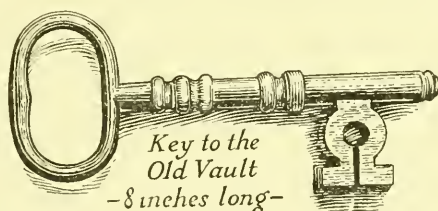


## INTRODUCTION

18, 1918, one hundred years from the date that it received its charter as a state bank, follows:

	<i>Capital paid in</i>	<i>Surplus</i>	<i>Undivided Profits</i>	<i>Deposits</i>
May 20, 1818 . . .	\$18,542.50			\$2,935.69
Oct. 10, 1821 . . .	300,000.00			79,117.11
April 1, 1824 . . .	500,000.00			78,064.76
April 24, 1865 . . .	939,450.00			423,087.23
April 18, 1866 . . .	1,000,000.00	\$10,400.00		506,847.10
April 24, 1885 . . .	1,000,000.00	200,000.00	\$26,861.56	1,854,305.23
April 24, 1905 . . .	1,000,000.00	200,000.00	362,692.61	3,975,701.41
Feb. 18, 1918 . . .	1,000,000.00	750,000.00	438,137.10	8,916,915.00
Total resources Feb. 18, 1918 . . . . .				\$12,669,554.46

As a state or national bank it has never passed a dividend, and has never paid less than six per cent to its stockholders in any year. Its surplus and undivided profits have been earned, not paid in by the stockholders, or increased by consolidation with any other institution.





*From a photograph*

THE MERCHANTS NATIONAL BANK OF PROVIDENCE

## OFFICERS OF THE BANK, 1818-1918

### *Presidents*

WILLIAM RICHMOND, 2D . . . . .	1818-1850
JOSIAH CHAPIN . . . . .	1850-1868
ROYAL C. TAFT . . . . .	1868-1908
EDWARD D. PEARCE . . . . .	1908-1909
ROBERT W. TAFT . . . . .	1909-

### *Vice-Presidents*

SAMUEL R. DORRANCE . . . . .	1902-1909
HORATIO N. CAMPBELL . . . . .	1910-1915
CHARLES H. NEWELL . . . . .	1917-
MOSES J. BARBER . . . . .	1917-

### *Cashiers*

JAMES WHEELOCK . . . . .	1818-1836
HENRY E. HUDSON . . . . .	1836-1840
HENRY P. KNIGHT . . . . .	1840-1846
WILLIAM B. BURDICK . . . . .	1846-1852
AUGUSTUS M. TOWER . . . . .	1852-1856
CHARLES T. ROBBINS . . . . .	1856-1868
JOHN W. VERNON . . . . .	1868-1902
MOSES J. BARBER . . . . .	1902-1918
FRANK A. GREENE . . . . .	1918-

### *Assistant Cashiers*

MOSES J. BARBER . . . . .	1894-1902
FRANK A. GREENE . . . . .	1903-1918
WILLARD I. ANGELL . . . . .	1918-
HARRY S. HATHAWAY . . . . .	1918-

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## OFFICERS OF THE MERCHANTS NATIONAL BANK, 1918

ROBERT W. TAFT, President  
 CHARLES H. NEWELL, Vice-President  
 MOSES J. BARBER, Vice-President  
 FRANK A. GREENE, Cashier  
 WILLARD I. ANGELL, Assistant Cashier  
 HARRY S. HATHAWAY, Assistant Cashier

## ROLL CALL OF DIRECTORS, 1818-1918

WILLIAM RICHMOND, 2D . . . . .	1818	LEWIS P. CHILD . . . . .	1851
ANDREW TAYLOR . . . . .	1818	SAMUEL N. RICHMOND, JR. . . . .	1851
GRAVENER TAFT . . . . .	1818	ALLEN BROWN . . . . .	1852
PELEG RHODES . . . . .	1818	MATHEW WATSON . . . . .	1852
TRUMAN BECKWITH . . . . .	1818	THOMAS BURGESS . . . . .	1856
SAMUEL N. RICHMOND . . . . .	1818	C. A. WHITMAN . . . . .	1856
RANDOLPH CHANDLER . . . . .	1818	ROYAL C. TAFT . . . . .	1859
STEPHEN H. SMITH . . . . .	1818	FRANK MAURAN . . . . .	1861
JOSHUA B. WOOD . . . . .	1818	CHRISTOPHER A. WHITMAN . . . . .	1861
CHARLES POTTER . . . . .	1818	FRANK E. RICHMOND . . . . .	1864
GEORGE S. RATHBONE . . . . .	1818	CHARLES MORRIS SMITH . . . . .	1867
CHARLES S. BOWLER . . . . .	1818	WILLIAM CORLISS . . . . .	1869
NATHAN TINGLEY . . . . .	1818	SAMUEL R. DORRANCE . . . . .	1869
WALKER HUMPHREY . . . . .	1819	JOHN W. DANIELSON . . . . .	1874
JOSIAH CHAPIN . . . . .	1819	EDWARD D. PEARCE, JR. . . . .	1874
CHARLES C. HOLDEN . . . . .	1820	HORATIO N. CAMPBELL . . . . .	1876
CARLO MAURAN . . . . .	1821	FREDERIC C. SAYLES . . . . .	1877
THOMAS C. HOPPIN . . . . .	1821	GEORGE M. SMITH . . . . .	1877
THOMAS BURGESS . . . . .	1824	LUCIAN SHARPE . . . . .	1897
CHARLES HOLDEN . . . . .	1824	HORATIO N. CAMPBELL, JR. . . . .	1899
JOSHUA MAURAN . . . . .	1828	FREDERIC C. SAYLES, JR. . . . .	1903
SAMUEL B. MUMFORD . . . . .	1828	ROBERT W. TAFT . . . . .	1908
WILLIAM COMSTOCK . . . . .	1833	HERBERT J. WELLS . . . . .	1908
JOSEPH WHEELOCK . . . . .	1837	CHARLES H. NEWELL . . . . .	1908
JOSIAH KEENE . . . . .	1837	WILLIAM B. McBEE . . . . .	1908
WILLIAM T. DORRANCE . . . . .	1842	ROWLAND HAZARD . . . . .	1912
SUCHET MAURAN, 2D . . . . .	1842	ARTHUR L. KELLEY . . . . .	1912
GEORGE M. RICHMOND . . . . .	1845	EVERETT L. SPENCER . . . . .	1915
RICHARD C. MARTIN . . . . .	1847	MOSES J. BARBER . . . . .	1916
AUGUSTUS C. MAURAN . . . . .	1850	FRANK E. RICHMOND, 2D . . . . .	1916
CHARLES F. TILLINGHAST . . . . .	1851	EDWARD P. JASTRAM . . . . .	1918

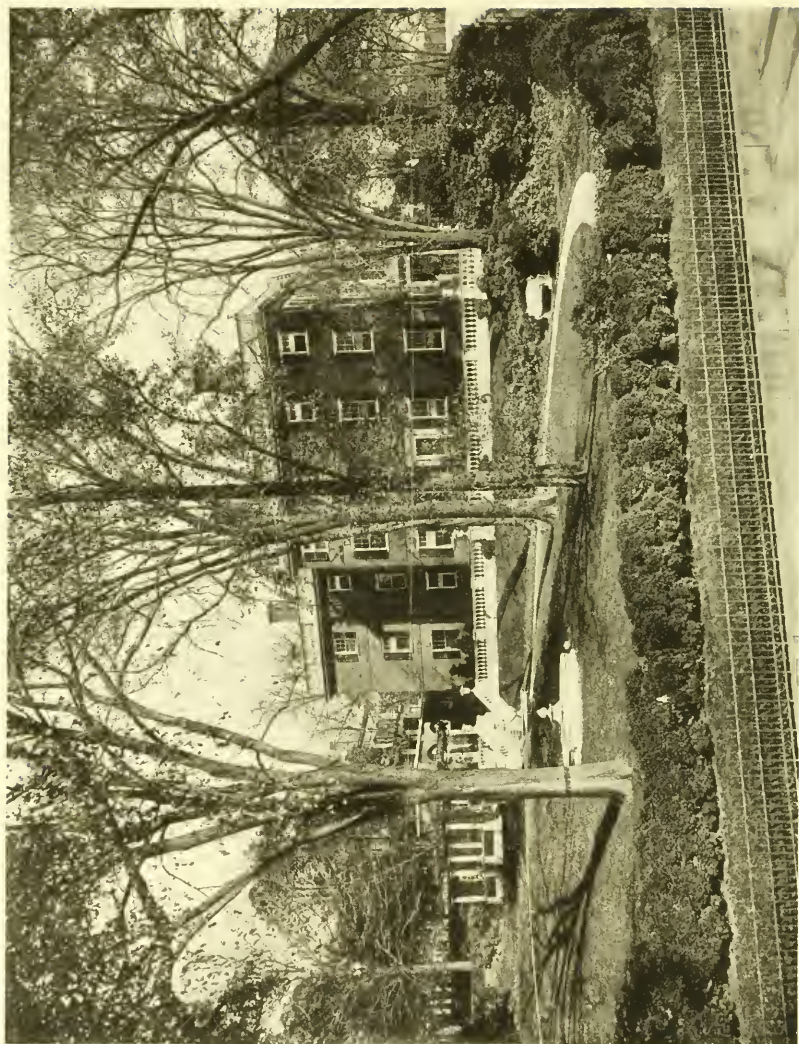
## PRESENT DIRECTORS

SAMUEL R. DORRANCE	WILLIAM B. McBEE
GEORGE M. SMITH	EVERETT L. SPENCER
HORATIO N. CAMPBELL	MOSES J. BARBER
ROBERT W. TAFT	FRANK E. RICHMOND, 2D
CHARLES H. NEWELL	EDWARD P. JASTRAM



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*From a photograph*

## THE JOHN BROWN HOUSE



◊ BUILDING UNDER WHICH FLOWS ROGER WILLIAMS' SPRING ◊

# Old Providence

## THE WILLIAMS HOMESTEAD

"Our sires drank from this living stream  
 Two hundred years ago,  
 And, from its fountain, water clear  
 Continues yet to flow.  
 We have a rich and noble theme,  
 Fit for a Prince or King,  
 'Tis water pure, and fresh and good,  
 From Roger Williams Spring."

*Sung at a dinner given in Providence, July 4, 1838.*

Banished from Salem because of alleged dangerous opinions against the authority of the magistrates there, Roger Williams in 1636 was "sorely tossed for one fourteen weeks, in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bed or bread did mean." He fled through the forest to an Indian lodge, where Massasoit, whom he had known in the Plymouth Colony, gave him shelter and protection. The aged chief granted his exile-guest land on the eastern side of the Seekonk River. There in April, 1636, Roger Williams, and four companions who had pushed on from the Plymouth Colony to join him, began to build a house. They also planted a crop of grain, which was never harvested; for Roger Williams found himself still within the limits, and within reach of the long arm of the law, of the colony from which he was

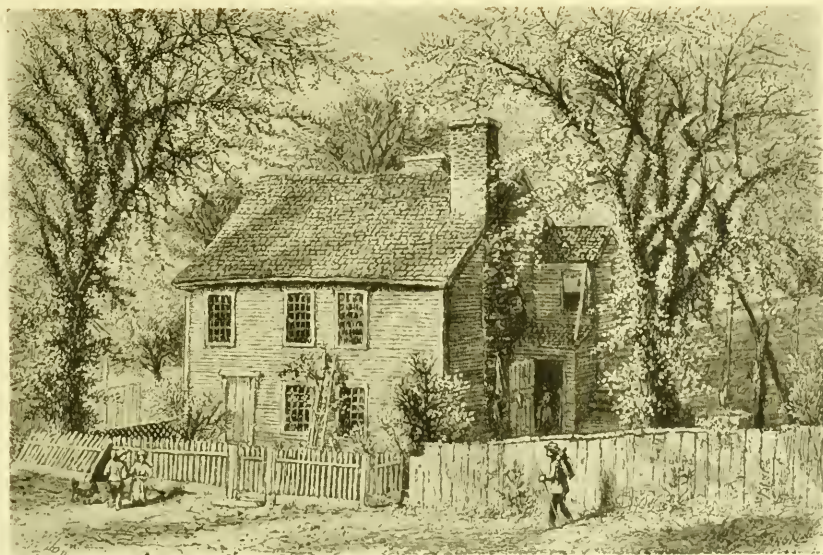


banished, and he was advised by Governor Winslow, his friend, to "remove to the other side of the water." This the exile and his companions hastened to do. They made their way to "Slate Rock," which is said to have been within the present limits of what is now Roger Williams Square in Providence. Tradition has it that an Indian on a hill near the rock called out to Williams, "What cheer, netop?" ("How are you, friend?") Williams and his party skirted the banks of the "great salt river," and in a cove a little below and west of the present site of St. John's Church they saw a spring. Near this they landed, and Roger Williams began his settlement. He called the place Providence "in commemoration of God's providence to him in his distress." "I desired," he said, "it might be for a shelter for persons distressed for conscience." And Providence fulfilled the destiny marked out for it by its noted founder.

At the present time the place which is closely associated with the man who named the city is a building (242 North Main Street) on which the State of Rhode Island has placed a tablet bearing the following inscription: "Under this house flows the Roger Williams Spring." The first houses of the settlement were clustered around this "fountain." They were probably crude, temporary shelters; for it was summer when the little colony was planted, and the people lived out of doors. As autumn approached and the foliage of the trees bordering the paths that led to the spring began to turn yellow and scarlet from the first tinge of frost, undoubtedly more substantial shelters were built,—log huts, perhaps of one room, with fireplace on the side. The land had been purchased by Williams from Canonicus and Miantinomi, and the grant was made by the Indians "in consideration of the many kindnesses and services he [Williams] hath continually done us." Home lots were granted to fifty-four settlers,—lots extending from the "towne street" (now North and South Main Streets) as far east as Hope Street.

Roger Williams built his house near the northeast corner of North Main and Howland Streets. Of this dwelling, which stood possibly eighty feet from the main thoroughfare, little is known. In 1906 a tablet was placed by the State of Rhode Island on the house at the northeast corner of the streets named, which was judged, after careful investigation, to be the point nearest the Williams homestead. Probably Mr. Williams's eldest son, said to be the first male child of English parents in Rhode Island, was born under its roof in the autumn of 1638. Roger Williams called his boy Providence. As the founder's declining years were passed, in the midst of his children and grandchildren, "by the fireside" of Daniel, his son, who lived at the south end of the "towne street," it is assumed that the Williams house had been burned or otherwise destroyed during one of the frequent Indian attacks on the colony.





Drawn by Wm. H. Gibson for "Picturesque America," 1870

Coll. of R. I. Hist. Soc.

## THE ROGER MOWRY HOUSE

*Where Roger Williams is said to have held Prayer-meetings*

Until 1900 Providence possessed a landmark which bound it very closely to the days when Roger Williams lived in the colony and to the days of King Philip's War. The Roger Mowry house—in later years known as the Abbott house—withstood the disasters which befell its neighbors, though eventually it was demolished to give place to a modern dwelling on the north side of Abbott Street, at No. 30, near the Old North Burying Ground. Five years after it was torn down, the ancient elm which stood near the house, and was said to have been one of the largest elms in the city, was cut down. So passed the sturdy guardian of a dwelling that played no small part in the early history of Providence.

Early records show that Roger Mowry came from Salem some time prior to 1650, and that in May, 1655, he was granted a license to keep a house of entertainment in Providence. The "ordinarie's brew" may have been sipped too often or too long; for in the course of the next half-dozen years the Assembly decreed that "no howse of entertainment shall suffer any person to tipple after 9 of the clock at night, except they give a satisfactory reason to the Constable or magistrate." The penalty for disobeying this decree was a fine of five shillings for the tavern-keeper and two shillings and sixpence for the person who "tipped."



Events of interest cluster about the old tavern. When John Clawson, a Dutch carpenter, was found dying one cold December morning in 1661 from a blow dealt by a broad-axe, at once his murderer was sought, and finally Waumanitt, an Indian, was charged with the crime and taken prisoner. There was apparently much difficulty in disposing of him. The charge for irons which the local blacksmith forged was considerable for a colony where shillings were scarce, and there was no prison in Providence to hold the captive. So he was removed to Roger Mowry's tavern, and there kept until other disposition was made of him, though exactly what was done is not recorded. It is stated that he was sent to Newport, and that Landlord Mowry presented his bill for housing Waumanitt. The tale went that Clawson, the slain man, had quarrelled violently with a neighbor, and that it was this neighbor, Hearndon by name, who killed Clawson, by whom he was recognized. It was said that Clawson roused sufficiently before he died to pronounce a curse against the Hearndons,—that he hoped they would bear split chins and be haunted for the rest of their natural lives by barberry-bushes (near a clump of these bushes Clawson was slain); and it is said that split chins for generations marked the Hearndons.

In the one-room house of Roger Mowry the Town Council met. "For this daies firing" and "for house roome" the Town Treasurer was directed, January 27, 1657, to pay one shilling and sixpence. There is a tradition that Roger Williams held prayer-meetings at Mowry's.

Ample evidence remains to show that the house was built as early as 1653. It was a house of some size; but originally was very small with a huge stone chimney, having only the "fire roome," as did the other houses of the day, and like them it sloped toward the street. At the outer doorway was a big flat stone, which served for a doorstep. The "fire room" was entered from the street, and was conspicuous for its chimney and great fireplace, occupying nearly one side of the house. Near this a steep staircase led to the loft above. There has been some conjecture as to why this old tavern was spared by the Indians during the attacks on the colony. What was spared by them was swept away by the growth of the city of Providence, and its passing took from the city a landmark of its earliest history.

### THE BETSEY WILLIAMS COTTAGE

*Set in the Midst of Acres owned for Generations by the Williams Family*

Betsey Williams cottage stands in Roger Williams Park on land originally owned by the Williams family. The woman for whom the cottage is named, a descendant of the founder of Providence, lived on her farm until her death in 1871, when the estate by provisions in her will passed to the city of Providence for a public park



*From a photograph*

#### THE BETSEY WILLIAMS COTTAGE

on condition that a memorial be erected on the land to her ancestor, Roger Williams. Her wishes were carried out, and the statue was unveiled in October, 1877.

The cottage was built by Nathaniel Williams about 1773 for his son, James Williams, the father of Betsey. It has been carefully preserved, and is one of the show-places of the city. The park of one hundred and three acres surrounding it is the largest in Providence. This property, situated in the southwestern part of the city, was originally owned by Joseph, the youngest son of Roger Williams, and remained in possession of the family until Miss Williams gave it to the city in 1871,—a period of more than two hundred years. Within its limits is the Williams burying-lot, and among the generations buried there are the remains of the family of Joseph Williams, the tombstone of Joseph bearing testimony to his service in the Indian wars. The home of Joseph Williams, built by him about 1680, formerly stood on Elmwood Avenue, on land within the present park limits. The house was demolished in 1886.

Roger Williams speaks of Joseph in a letter written to Winthrop in 1660: "My youngest son, Joseph, was troubled with a spice of epilepsy: We used some remedies, but it hath pleased God, by his taking tobacco, perfectly, as we hope to cure him." The "cure"



was evidently effective, for Joseph lived to a hale old age. He was a man prominent in public affairs, and held many offices of importance, among them that of deputy in the Colonial Assembly. He was also a member of the Town Council. His death occurred in 1724; and his estate consisted of some 730 acres, which with his dwelling-place and orchard he left to his son James, who was charged by his father "to provide for his Mother my said loveing Wife Lidia Williams all things that shee shall have neede of and that are necessary for an antiant woman during the full term of her naturall Life." The "Wife Lidia" survived her husband but three weeks. She was buried by his side on the farm at Mashapaug,—which to-day is included among the acres of Roger Williams Park,—bequeathed to the city of Providence by Betsey Williams.

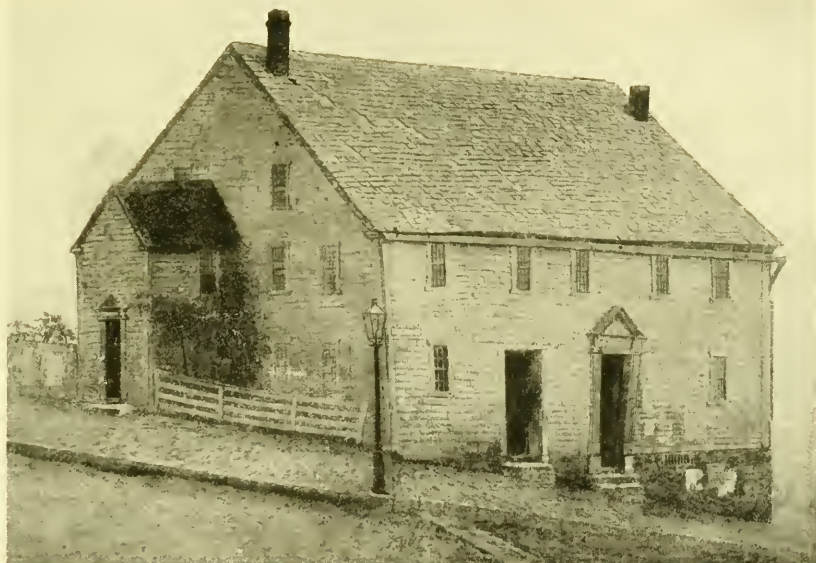
### THE OLD TOWN HOUSE

*In which Interesting Local History was made*

When College Street was Rosemary Lane (which it was when it first came into existence in 1720) and when Benefit Street was little more than the proverbial calf-path, the Old Town House stood where the two streets intersect on a part of the land now occupied by the Providence County Court House. This historic edifice was built by the First Congregational Church of Providence in 1723, and was used for a meeting-house until 1795, when it was given the name by which it has ever since been known. The history of this part of Providence is made more interesting by the fact that the lot on which once stood the Old Town House has been occupied successively by a meeting-house, a town-house, and a court-house.

A movement for the formation of a Congregational society in Providence was started, according to some authorities, as early as 1718, when, to quote from the records of the First Congregational Church at Marblehead, the following event occurred: "Collections for Pious and Charitable uses by this Church 1718. Dec. 11. Public Thanksgiving, a Collection for the Building of a Meeting House in the Town of Providence in Rhode Island Government that the Gospel might be settled among them. Gathered 16£.18s., and this Money is turned into the hands of Edward Bromfield, Esq., Treasurer." Whether this money was put to immediate use is not recorded, though it is true that a partially erected meeting-house was abandoned because of general dissatisfaction. In 1723 Daniel Abbott and Mary, his wife, deeded to "the Congregational ministers of Medfield, Bristol, and Rehoboth, and to the eldest deacon in each of those churches, as trustees, a portion of the Chad Brown home lot on the Towne Street, beginning 'twelve poles eastward from the said Street . . . for the erecting and building a meeting house.'"





*Coll. of R. I. Hist. Soc.*

THE OLD TOWN HOUSE 1723-1860

*Oil painting by Geo. W. Harris, done just before it was torn down in 1860*

The first pastor of this small congregation was Josiah Cotton, who had been graduated in the class of 1722 of Harvard College. This was his first parish, and he was installed, with much ceremony, October 23, 1728. After the services a dinner was served at the home of Captain Daniel Abbott. The church-roll at this time showed nine men and the young minister. The church as an organization passed through various vicissitudes. Just prior to the Revolutionary War the old steeple on the Benefit Street end of the church building was in a dilapidated condition, and at the May session of the General Assembly there was passed a resolution that gave the church-members the right to raise £700 by lottery, the object of which was to procure funds to repair the steeple and also the church itself. A town clock was mentioned as a desirable thing for the west end of the building. The steeple, however, apparently was allowed to tumble down; and the clock was probably never placed in the position designated for it.

It is fortunate for those interested in this landmark that there is in existence an excellent picture of it, painted by George W. Harris for Henry C. Whitaker in 1860, shortly before the old building was torn down, the point of view being the northeast corner of Benefit and College Streets. In 1890 the painting was presented to the Rhode Island Historical Society by Mrs. Harriet M. Whitaker.



*From a photograph by John R. Hess*

#### THE OLD TURK'S HEAD BUILDING

*Where once stood Jacob Whitman's house surmounted by the Turk's head*

#### TURK'S HEAD

*On this Corner the Head of the Sultan was long a Landmark*

The story goes that Captain Samuel Currie and Jacob Whitman met one day in the decade between 1746 and 1756 on the balcony in front of the old Manufacturers' Hotel—then a well-known tavern—on the site of the present Providence-Washington Building. Several men were on the balcony when Captain Currie and Mr. Whitman appeared.

"I want to purchase some land," remarked Mr. Whitman.

"Buy that swamp," suggested one of the group assembled, indicating a salt marsh across the river, a part of which now is the junction of Westminster and Weybosset Streets, where stands the present Turk's Head Building, said to be the tallest structure in the State. "After you are through with your day's work, on moonlight nights you might fill in the lot from yonder sand hill."

"I'm thinking of buying land also," Captain Currie may have suggested.

"Steer clear of that swamp," somebody warned. "Buy land on the hill [now Constitution Hill]. It's central and will increase in value, and is by far the better investment."

Both men, to continue the story as it has been handed down, did as they were told. Mr. Whitman filled in his salt marsh by moon-



light. Captain Currie bought his land, and waited for it to increase in value. Years later he sold it for barely the original cost. The Whitman land is to-day one of the most valuable sites in Providence. Mr. Whitman built a house on the site of the present Turk's Head Building, and here he lived until his death in 1802. The house, erected about 1750, has been described as a large, gambrel-roofed structure; and "his garden, which was extensive, was stocked with choice ornamental shade and fruit trees, shrubs and flowers, and was an attractive place of resort for the children of the neighborhood. In his garden stood a famous white mulberry-tree, said to have been the largest of its kind in the State, and so large that six children with clasped hands could barely inclose its circumference. On the front and north side of Mr. Whitman's house was a piazza; on the roof of the piazza was a balustrade, and at the corner towards the bridge, probably upon a post, the renowned Turk's Head."

Whitman's Corner became one of the famous places in Providence; and the Turk's Head, which surmounted a corner of his house, won fame also. There has been much conjecture as to where this head came from, and also where it went. It was enormous in size and frightful in appearance. All children were afraid of it; some women were; and no doubt it had secret terrors for the late night prowler. Its eyes were large, also its nose and tongue. It has been described as having a beard of considerable size. Over this terrifying visage towered a great turban. Undoubtedly the Turk's Head was originally the figure-head of an East Indiaman. According to all reports the figure-head had thrilling adventures long after its voyages between this port and the Far East were over. It was washed away in the great gale of 1815, during which the square where stood the Whitman house was visited by a six-foot tide. The figure-head was probably recovered by a member of the Whitman family, as it remained for several years under the cellar stairs of Mr. Jacob Whitman, 2d, who lived in the farm-house at the corner of High Street and "Love Lane" (now Knight Street). About 1824 Mr. Whitman shipped the head to his son George in Montgomery, Alabama, where it was set up over his place of business. A party of young men one night, having drunk a good deal, stole the Turk's Head, packed it in a wooden box, and shipped it to the Governor of Alabama, specifying that it was the head of the Indian chief for whom he had offered a reward. Eventually the head again came into the possession of George Whitman, and once more it was placed over his shop. When he closed his business, the great head was placed in a warehouse with other goods. The warehouse is said to have burned, and with it the Turk's Head. There is a tradition that it was never burned at all, but that Cherokee Indians obtained possession of it and set it up for worship.



From a photograph

JOHN CARTER'S HOUSE at the left, and JOHN UPDIKE'S HOUSE at the right

## THE SIGN OF "SHAKESPEAR'S HEAD" IN GAOL LANE

*Where once was published the "Providence Gazette"*

"Shakespear's Head" still stands at 21 Meeting Street. Here lived John Carter, who for a time printed the *Providence Gazette*, founded by William Goddard, its publisher and editor. The first issue of the paper appeared October 20, 1762. Mr. Goddard printed not only the first newspaper, but also the first handbill in Providence. "Morro Castle taken by Storm" was the heading of the latter. The office of the paper was several times changed, and finally the publication suspended on account of the Stamp Act. Prior to its suspension it had attained much influence, among the contributors being Stephen Hopkins, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Mr. Goddard printed several pamphlets, among them "A Discourse addressed to the Sons of Liberty. At a solemn Assembly, near Liberty Tree in Providence February 14, 1766." Later the publisher left Providence, and entered the editorial field in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore.

The publication of the *Gazette* was resumed in 1766 by "Sarah





Goddard & Company"; and in September of the following year her son William, who became a well-known writer, and John Carter, of Philadelphia, were the publishers. Eventually John Carter became sole publisher, and established himself at "Shakespear's Head." Carter had been taught printing by Benjamin Franklin, and as a publisher in Providence he was most successful. He continued the publication of the *Gazette* until February, 1814, when he sold the business to Hugh H. Brown and William H. Wilson.

From all accounts, spice was added to the routine of Carter's days by the fact that John Updike, his brother-in-law, rented his house next door to "Shakespear's Head" to a rival printer, whom Carter strenuously tried to outdo; and the quarrels that ensued between Captain Updike and his tenant gave much amusement to the neighbors. The Updike house is still standing. Carter is said to have been singularly shrewd at repartee. The interesting printer's shop, which was described in October, 1771, as "the new building on Main street, opposite the Friends' meeting house," has been thus spoken of:—

"John Carter's 'Sign of Shakespear's Head' topped a post some six or eight feet in height which stood before the house, and symbolized the treasures of literature to be found within."

### THE SABIN TAVERN

*The First Blow of the Colonists for Independence was struck here*

"Now for to find these people out  
King George has offered every stout,  
One thousand pounds to find out one  
That wounded William Duddingston.  
One thousand more he says he'll spare,  
For one who say they sheriffs were;  
One thousand more there doth remain  
For to find out the leader's name,  
Likewise five hundred pounds per man  
For any one of all the clan."

A man beating a drum marched through the Main Street of Providence on the night of June 9, 1772, calling out to the inhabitants that the English schooner *Gaspee* was aground on Namquit Point, and any of those disposed to destroy her might assemble that night at the house of James Sabin. It was a resolute body of men who gathered in the southeast room of Sabin Tavern. They were the leading citizens of the town, with whom were mingled many youths who spent the evening in making bullets in the kitchen. On the street a subdued excitement was apparent, and restless footsteps passed and repassed the tavern. In the southeast room, a crude map spread on the table before them, the men gathered, and heard the tale of





how six or seven miles below the town the schooner *Gaspee* was aground. The *Gaspee* had been stationed by the British Government at Narragansett Bay to enforce the revenue laws. The packet *Hannah*, under Captain Benjamin Lindsey, on her way from Newport to Providence, that day had passed the *Gaspee*, and had neither struck her flag nor "come to" when the *Gaspee* fired on her. The revenue schooner immediately got under sail, and pursued the *Hannah*, which continued on her way to Providence. Captain Lindsey, perfectly familiar with the waters, ran ashore. The *Gaspee*, commanded by Duddingston, followed, intending to shut her rival off close to the shore. The *Gaspee* went aground off Namquit Point; and, as the tide was ebbing, Captain Lindsey knew that she could not get under way again until early the following morning. Lindsey hastened to Providence, and there told the story, which brought about the meeting in Sabin Tavern. Welcome Arnold and John Brown were among the leading men of the gathering.

Orders were issued, and at ten o'clock John Brown directed one of his ablest shipmasters to collect eight of the largest long-boats in the harbor, with five oars each. He ordered the rowlocks to be muffled, and told one of his men to bring the boats to Fenner's Wharf, just below Sabin Tavern. Orders were given to embark. Captains were placed as steersmen over each boat, and among them were Captain Abraham Whipple (who was placed in command of the party), John B. Hopkins, and Benjamin Dunn. The men plied their muffled oars until within about sixty yards of the *Gaspee*.

"Who comes there?" called a sentinel.

No answer.

"Who comes there?"

No answer.

Captain Duddingston next hailed.

"Eph," said Joseph Bucklin to his companion in one of the boats, "reach me my gun. I can kill that fellow!"

And Joseph Bucklin, in the Revolutionary War, fired the first shot at a vessel of the British Navy. Duddingston fell.

"I have killed that rascal!" exclaimed Bucklin.

It was but a moment before the boats were alongside the *Gaspee*. Duddingston called for dressings for his wound; and, without resistance, crew and commander left the schooner, which was burned by the party from Sabin Tavern.

The boats returned to Providence early in the morning; and, though approximately a hundred men out of a population of more than a thousand were active participants, not a person would admit that he knew who burned the *Gaspee*. It has even been said that the deputy governor, Darius Sessions, "had only heard a drum beating about the streets, but just then important business had called



## OLD PROVIDENCE



him out of town and he knew nothing of what had happened further." The British Government made a vigorous search for members of the party, and offered considerable sums in reward for the apprehension of the same; but nothing came of it.

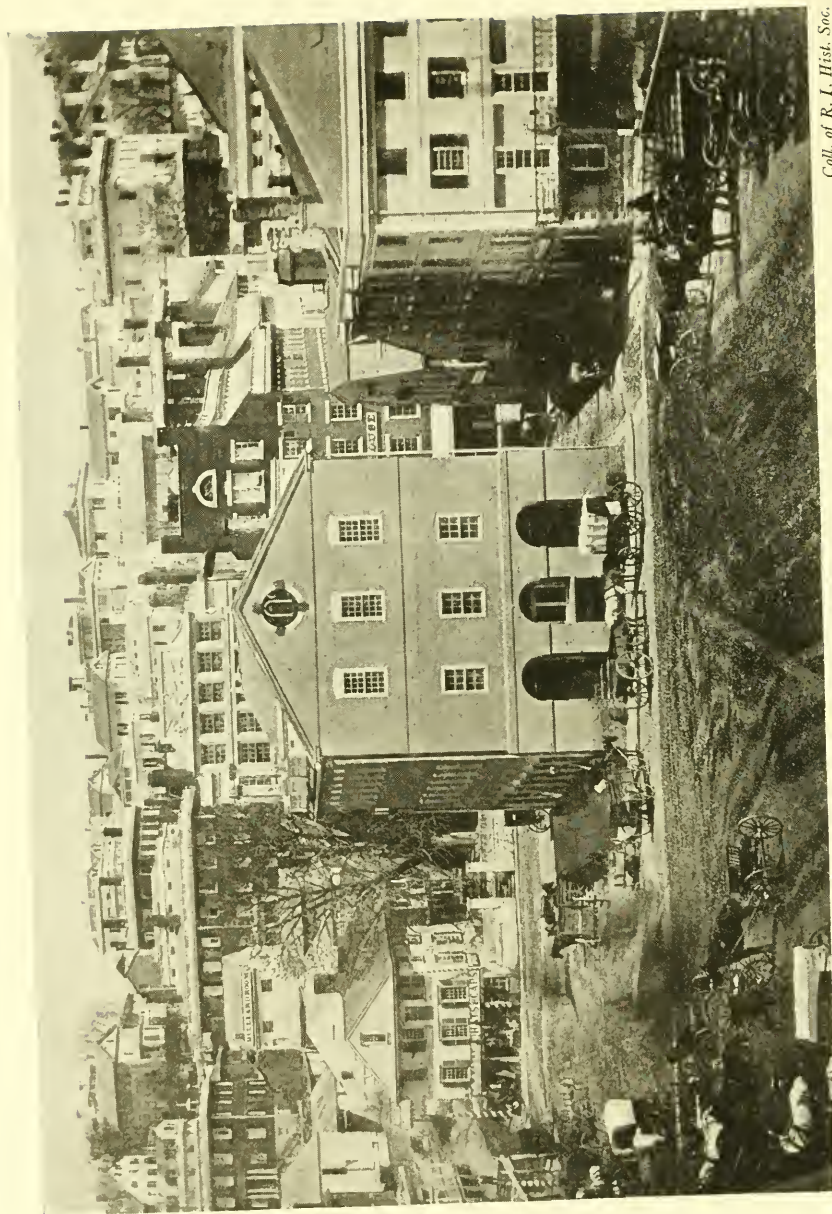
Old Sabin Tavern, where was planned this first armed resistance on the part of the colonists, was at the corner of South Main and Planet Streets. It was built about 1763. The house was unfinished at the time the plot was formed. The lot on which it stood was owned, according to the grant of 1640, by William Burrows; and in the year 1757 it was purchased by Woodbury Morris from Joseph Whipple for £1200. Woodbury Morris may have built the house and leased it to James Sabin. Of Sabin's actual ownership there is no record, though it is known that under his management it was conducted as a "house of boarding and entertainment for gentlemen." In 1785 Welcome Arnold bought the estate, which was in what was then an excellent residential section of Providence.

Welcome Arnold lived in the house until his death in 1798, after which it became the home of his eldest son, Samuel G. Arnold, and subsequently the home of Colonel Richard J. Arnold. During this time the house was enlarged and improved. In 1891, when it was proposed to tear down the stately edifice, Mrs. William Richmond Talbot, a grand-daughter of Welcome Arnold, had the room in which was formed the *Gaspee* plot removed to her home on the southwest corner of Williams and East Streets. "In this room," says an inscription above the old fireplace, "June 9, 1772, was formed the plan for the destruction of the British Naval Schooner, 'Gaspee.'" This is one of the most interesting historic spots in Providence.

### THE SABIN TAVERN AS IT APPEARED BEFORE ITS DEMOLITION

*Coll. of Cornelia Arnold, wife of William Richmond Talbot*





*From a photograph*

THE MARKET HOUSE IN THE EARLY FORTIES





## THE MARKET HOUSE

*The Scene of Early Revolutionary Events*

The Old Market House stands to-day on the east side of Market Square in the heart of the city,—a reminder of tea-parties and the days of George III. Its corner-stone was laid on Tuesday, June 8, 1773, by Nicholas Brown, whose brother Joseph had worked on the designs of the building. The market-place had been in existence, for some time before this event, being an open space on the west side of the river. Dr. Bowen, Arthur Fenner, and Governor Jenckes lived on the east side of the square in substantial houses, while the north and south sides of the market-place were occupied by houses probably of the Roger Mowry type. Enterprising citizens several times suggested that a market-house be built, and started movements to procure one; but the financial part of the movement was not so easily managed. Finally several of the prominent business men sent a petition in 1771 to the General Assembly, requesting permission to hold a lottery, then a popular means of raising public funds. The petition was granted, but nearly two years went by before the corner-stone was laid on the eventful June 8, already mentioned. The cellar was dug by the autumn of 1773. Work was suspended during the winter of that year, but by the following July the men of Providence were invited to a “raising” of the first story and were liberally treated to rum. Silas Downer, who a short time before the building of the market-house had delivered a stirring “Liberty Tree” address, and who was a young lawyer of some distinction, was appointed clerk of the market. The lower story of the building was used as a market, and the second story occupied by the town officers and tenants.

The Market House came into existence when rebellion against British taxation was flaming in the hearts of the colonists. Providence felt no less keenly concerning injustice done than did some of the other cities where fires in the name of liberty had already been kindled. When the Continental Congress recommended that a committee of inspection be appointed by Providence, such a committee was chosen; and among its eighteen members were John Brown, Joseph Brown, Jabez Bowen, John Jenckes, Joseph Russell, and Nicholas Cooke. In the chamber appointed for its use in the Market House this committee met, and at its first meeting an article was read which referred to the use of tea after March 1, 1775.

The town crier on the 2d of March gave notice: “At five of the clock this afternoon, a quantity of India tea will be burnt in the Market Place. All true friends of their country, lovers of freedom, and haters of *shackles* and *hand cuffs*, are hereby invited to testify their good disposition, by bringing in and casting into the fire, a



needless herb, which for a long time, hath been highly detrimental to our liberty, interest, and health!"

The people assembled in Market Square at five o'clock, where they burned three hundred pounds of tea, a tar-barrel, Lord North's speech, and various newspapers. The demonstration was accompanied by tolling bells and a cheerfulness that was remarkable. The *Gazette* adds that, "whilst the Tea was burning, a spirited Son of Liberty went along the streets with his brush and lampblack, and obliterated or unpainted the word TEA on the shop signs." In commemoration of this event the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1894 placed a bronze tablet on the Market House. Another tablet records the fact that the building of the third story by St. John's Masonic Lodge was completed in the year 1797, and that the new quarters were dedicated on December 27 of that year. To Masons throughout the United States this old Market House in Providence is noteworthy from the fact that in it, on August 23, 1802, Thomas Smith Webb, the moving spirit in masonry at the close of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, organized Saint John's Encampment (now Commandery) Number One, Knights Templars, the oldest Templar organization in America. Templar ritual stands to-day substantially as Webb prepared it for this first Commandery, whose records have been preserved intact for one hundred and sixteen years. Here too was organized in 1805 the Grand Encampment (now Commandery) of Massachusetts and Rhode Island by Saint John's Number One, Boston Number Two, and Newburyport Commandery Number Three. The Market House was also the scene of numerous Masonic conventions which resulted in 1816 in the organization of the Grand Encampment of the United States.

When, during the Revolution, the French troops were encamped in Providence, the Market House was used as a barracks. It witnessed the developments of the Revolution, and was a participant in many of the stirring scenes which attended it.

The king's proclamation was posted on the hay-scales, on its eastern end, offering a munificent reward for information concerning those who participated in the *Gaspee* plot. There is a tradition that a well-known lawyer of the day, John Aplin, tore down the broadside, "removing the source of temptation, and possibly saving some of his townsmen from a hangman's rope."

The Providence Chamber of Commerce now occupies the old Market House, which is the oldest municipal building in the city; and, with the exception of the Old State House on North Main Street, it is the oldest public building.





From a photograph by John R. Hess

Directly above the boy's head is seen the tablet placed by the R. I. Hist. Soc.

## THE STEPHEN HOPKINS HOUSE

*Where lived Stephen Hopkins, a Signer of the Declaration of Independence, and where Washington was a Guest*

"My hand trembles, but my heart does not," said Stephen Hopkins, as with palsied fingers he inscribed his name to the Declaration of Independence.

It is unfortunately true—and this fact has been pointed out by one who has given close study to the life of this noted man—that no portrait remains of Stephen Hopkins, that even his likeness in the famous Trumbull group of the signers was sketched from the face of Stephen Hopkins's son. Thus a picture of him can only be formed by the events with which he was intimately associated.

He was born in 1707 within the limits of the present city of Providence. He became a member of the legislature, a governor of Rhode Island, a chief justice of the Supreme Court, and a member of the Continental Congress of 1774, which a year later adopted the Declaration of Independence. Esek Hopkins, the first commander-in-chief of the American Navy, was his brother.



Stephen Hopkins built his house on a thoroughfare which since 1805 has been Hopkins Street. In 1742, when the house was built, it was situated on Town Street, near the water and the lumber yards, —a district very sparsely settled at the time. From its early location the house was moved to its present one in 1804.

About Hopkins's old house linger many memories. In 1776 Washington reached Providence. This visit followed closely the evacuation of Boston. The general and his staff, and General Gates, "were invited to an elegant entertainment at Hacker's Hall, provided by the gentlemen of the town, where, after dinner, a number of patriotic toasts were drunk." The town authorities considered, and decided that no place of entertainment was so appropriate as Governor Hopkins's house. The master of the house was in Philadelphia, but his daughter Ruth was at home; and, when the town representatives brought General Washington, Ruth calmly set herself about making her guest comfortable. Many were the suggestions, if tradition may be relied on, that were offered to Ruth Hopkins by her anxious neighbors. Silver was tendered, and linen, food, and china. But to all these overtures Ruth turned a deaf ear, asserting, with all respect to her distinguished guest, that what was good enough for her father was good enough for General Washington. ("She adored her father," a dear old soul added.) The room where Washington slept became from that day an historic place, and it was counted a great privilege to sleep in it.

The French troops in 1781 encamped in Newport, and Washington again visited Rhode Island. After a conference with General Rochambeau, he left Newport, and on the 13th of March arrived in Providence. It was during his stay that Washington visited again the home of Stephen Hopkins. Moses Brown tells of his visit: "I was with him, sitting, when General Washington by himself alone called to see him. I sat some time, viewing the simple, friendly and pleasant manner" in which "these two great men met and conversed with each other on various subjects." Some time afterward Mr. Brown spoke of again seeing Washington and of being impressed with his easy, simple manner,—“very like that of Stephen Hopkins.”

### THE ESEK HOPKINS HOUSE

*Where lived Esek Hopkins, the First Commander-in-chief of the American Navy*

The homestead of Esek Hopkins on the east side of Admiral Street was in 1907 given to the city of Providence by Elizabeth Angell Gould. The State of Rhode Island has placed on it a tablet whereon is the following inscription:—

ESEK HOPKINS, 1718-1802, FIRST COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE  
AMERICAN NAVY, LIVED IN THIS HOUSE



*From a photograph*

THE ESEK HOPKINS HOUSE

*Coll. of R. I. Hist. Soc.*

The first commander-in-chief of the American Navy, the foundation of which was laid in Rhode Island waters, was Esek Hopkins, whose term of military service covered only two months and eighteen days. He was appointed commander-in-chief of the American Navy on December 21, 1775. It has been said that his title was intended to correspond to Washington's rank in the army. There seems to be some confusion as to the title; for he was sometimes addressed as commodore and at other times as admiral, both official designations being used by Congress and the Committee of Naval Affairs.

Rhode Island as early as June, 1775, had demonstrated her readiness for naval action, when the General Assembly directed that two vessels be chartered (one of ten guns and eighty men, and the other somewhat smaller), in order that the trade of the colony might be protected. Abraham Whipple was put in command of this force, and on the day of his appointment fired the first cannon in naval action and captured the first prize taken in the American Revolution. On the organization of the Continental fleet, Whipple was transferred from the State to the Continental service, and was placed in command of the ship *Columbus* under Commodore Hopkins.

Hopkins sailed for Philadelphia in the early part of January, 1776,



in the *Katy*, afterward named the *Providence*. He captured a small craft and a few prisoners, and arrived in Philadelphia on January 14. "Our seamen arrived here," it was reported, "day before yesterday. Those concerned in the naval department are highly pleased with them. Their arrival gives fresh spirit to the whole fleet." A number of ships were rapidly equipped. In speaking of the name of the *Katy* being changed, John Adams says, "She was named for the town where she was purchased, the residence of Governor Hopkins and his brother Esek, whom we appointed the first captain."

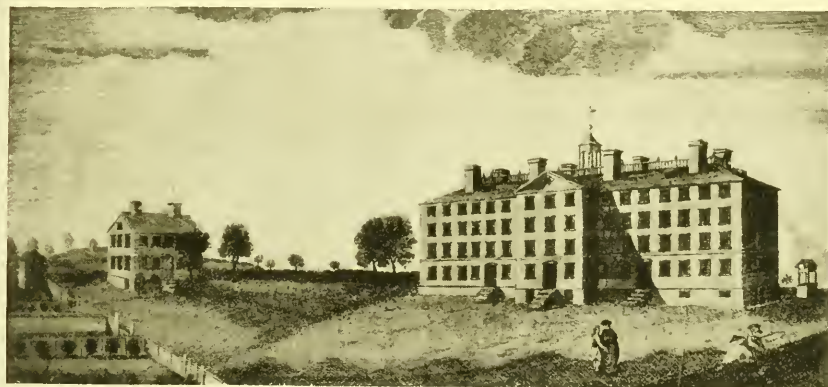
Orders were given Commodore Hopkins by the Marine Committee to locate and attack the enemy's ships in Chesapeake Bay. From there he was to proceed to Rhode Island to destroy the British fleet, and afterward he was to sail to the island of New Providence to secure powder, of which the colonists were in much need. Disaster attended the expedition from first to last. Sickness spread among the crew, and there were many cases of small-pox. Heavy gales from the northeast began to blow. The harbors were occupied by the enemy. Commodore Hopkins used the discretion which his orders left to him, and sailed for New Providence in the Bahamas, where he seized cannon and some small stores of ammunition, loaded his ships, and started north again, capturing on the way two small vessels loaded with arms and stores. The next morning he encountered the British frigate *Glasgow*. After a desperate encounter in which the American ships were partially disabled, the *Glasgow* escaped. No blame was attached to Commodore Hopkins for this episode. Indeed, John Paul Jones has only the highest praise for his commander, and John Hancock on behalf of Congress sincerely congratulated Hopkins for his deportment in the encounter, adding that "it is to be regretted that the Glasgow made her escape, yet as it was not due to any misconduct, the praise due you and the other officers is undoubtedly the same." In spite of all these things the *Glasgow* episode became the peg on which multitudes of dissensions were hung, and it was really the beginning of troubles innumerable for the worthy commander. Among the recruits drawn for later voyages, sickness prevailed, the sailors were dissatisfied, and Commodore Hopkins found difficulty in obtaining their wages. Matters went from bad to worse. Correspondence to some extent was carried on between Hopkins and the Marine Committee. Enemies of Commodore Hopkins became active; and on January 2, 1778, he was dismissed from the naval service of his country. Still, he adds, "I am determined to continue a friend of my country, neither do I intend to remain inactive." And this activity characterized his life until the end. He served Rhode Island at home, took his seat in the legislature, and was appointed a member of the Council of War. For more than thirty years he so served his country. Throughout these years he had watched the ad-





vancement of John Adams whom he greatly admired; and in 1797, when this distinguished President visited Providence, he was told by a messenger at the Golden Ball Tavern (the present Mansion House), where he and his family were guests, that a gentleman was waiting below and wished to see him. It was Esek Hopkins, who hobbled toward Mr. Adams as he came into the great hall of the inn, and, with tears streaming from his eyes, clasped the President's hand and thanked him again and again for defending him at the time of his dismissal from his country's service. Adams in his diary gives a detailed account of this pathetic occurrence, and adds that Esek Hopkins said "he knew not for what end he was continued in life, unless it were to punish his friends or teach his children and grandchildren to respect me."

The *Providence Gazette* of March 6, 1802, announces his death: "On Friday the 26th ult. at his residence in North Providence, Esek Hopkins, Esq.; in the 84th year of his age." So passed the "inflexible patriot."



*From the Early History of Brown University, by Dr. Reuben A. Guild  
Courtesy of the Guild family*

## UNIVERSITY HALL AND FIRST PRESIDENT'S HOUSE

*In University Hall, Troops were quartered during the Revolution*

The Philadelphia Association, the oldest Baptist association in America, was founded in 1707. To it Brown University owes its origin. Under its auspices was founded in 1756 in the State of New Jersey an academy where young men were educated for the ministry. Out of the success of this academy was born a desire to establish a Baptist college, proposed at a memorable meeting of the Association in Philadelphia on the 12th of October, 1762. "The first mover for it in 1762," said the Rev. Morgan Edwards, "was laughed at as the





projector of a thing impracticable. Nay, many of the Baptists themselves discouraged the design, prophesying evil to the churches in case it would take place, from an unhappy prejudice against learning."

The first meeting of the "Corporation for founding and endowing a College or University within the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England in America" was held in September, 1764, in Newport. Twenty-four men, among whom were Stephen Hopkins, Nicholas Brown, and Daniel Jenckes, attended the meeting. At the second meeting, in the following September, James Manning was chosen president of the college. The first commencement was held in 1769 in Warren, when a class of seven was graduated,—a considerable growth during the four years that had passed. President Manning began with a single pupil. Up to the first commencement, Edwards says, "the Seminary was for the most part friendless and moneyless, and therefore forlorn, insomuch that a college edifice was hardly thought of." Moses Brown, founder of the Friends' School, suggested that the college be moved to Providence. Whereupon the towns of Warren, East Greenwich, and Newport asked that the college be given to them. At the meeting held in Newport on November 14, 1769, these claims were heard. It was voted that the college edifice be at Providence.

The corner-stone of University Hall, one of the oldest and, historically, perhaps the most interesting in the State of Rhode Island, was laid by John Brown, May 14, 1770. Four thousand dollars had been raised by the people of Providence, and the lot on which University Hall was built was a part of the farm of Chad Brown. The money raised being insufficient to complete the structure, but two stories were built.

The house of James Manning, the first president of Brown University, was built in 1771, and was situated between the present refectory and Manning Hall. Here lived James Manning during the larger part of his life, and here also lived Maxcy, Messer, and Wayland, his successors. When a new president's house was built in 1840, the old house of Manning was moved down the hill, where, after a second removal, it still stands, one of a number of old buildings similar to it in architecture.

University Hall is said to have been on the same plan as Nassau Hall at Princeton University, "built of brick, four stories high and 150 feet long." The bricks of which it was built are said to have been brought from Rehoboth. Extensive pasture-lands surrounded the hall, and it has been recalled that President Manning's cows grazed on the campus. His well at the southeast corner of the hall was used for many years.

Twenty-five students were enrolled under Mr. Manning, and they were served "three good meals per day" for the sum of a dollar a week. In 1776, when Sir Peter Parker, the British commander, with eleven men-of-war and seventy transports landed in Newport,



Providence was in a state of great excitement. Martial law was proclaimed. President Manning dismissed his students. He says: "The Country flew to Arms & marched for Providence, there, unprovided with Barracks they marched into the College & dispossessed the Students, about 40 in Number." "The town," says another writer, "exhibited the appearance of a camp. The college building was first used as quarters for the artillery and the grounds around it for parade, and afterwards for a hospital for sick soldiers." In the claim for damages presented by the college corporation to the United States Government after the war, it is stated that University Hall was used by the American Army as a barracks and hospital from December 10, 1776, to April 20, 1780, and then, following its evacuation by Washington's men, it was turned over to the French troops which had come to aid us, and was used by them as a hospital from June 26, 1780, to May 27, 1782. When the building was finally re-occupied by the college it was in a pretty bad condition, much damage having been done by the martial uses to which it had for so long been put, and in 1782 and 1792 the college corporation presented to the federal government bills amounting to a total of about \$7,660, for use of and damage to the hall. Not until 1800 was any compensation received, and then it amounted to only \$2,779.13. A thousand dollars was paid out by the corporation for repairs, and the third story was complete in 1785. In 1798 the fourth story was added. An act was passed by Congress on April 16, 1800, to reimburse the college for the use of the building; and the sum paid over was \$2,000. A quarter of a century later the building was named University Hall. There have been various changes made in the interior from time to time. The final restoration of the exterior was paid for by Marsden J. Perry.

George Washington visited the college in 1790. "The president," reports the *Gazette*, "and many others took a walk on the college green to view the illumination of the building by the students, which made a most splendid appearance."

At the commencement of 1790 twenty-two men took their degrees, and among the number were Moses Brown, the youngest son of Nicholas Brown, and Asa Messer, who became the third president of the university. When the exercises were concluded, the degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred on George Washington, first President of the United States.

In 1804, in consideration of the many benefactions received from Nicholas Brown, the name of the corporation was changed from the Rhode Island College to Brown University. Mr. Brown eighteen years later built the second college building, which at his suggestion was named Hope College for his sister, Hope Ives. He gave in 1835 a third building, which he named Manning Hall in honor of James Manning, first president of the university.



## THE BAPTIST CHURCH

*The Oldest Baptist Church in America and the Second Oldest in the World*

Not far from the Baptist church, Roger Williams and his five companions were greeted by friendly Indians; but a short distance away was the home of Roger Williams, and his spring; near by his covenants were made with the redmen; in this vicinity a civil state was founded and Roger Williams baptized; and within a peaceful orchard close by was he buried. "The first Baptist Church," says a tablet on the side next to North Main Street, "founded by Roger Williams, A.D. 1638. The oldest Baptist Church in America. The oldest church in the State. This Meeting House erected A.D. 1775." The tablet was the gift of George M. Snow in memory of his wife.

The *Providence Journal* gives an interesting account of this church. "Of all denominations," it says, "Providence owes most to the Baptists. They founded the city; they built the first church of the faith upon this continent; they worked on for their little settlement through stern hardship; very largely through the influence of the Baptists Rhode Island College—now Brown University—was located here. . . . The Mother Church of America is here. . . . Roger Williams, who founded the city, originated the church, and was its first pastor. For the first sixty years of the Colony's existence there was no meeting-house for the church, and for over a century no salary was paid its ministers. Each pastor earned his own living in secular pursuits. When Brown University came to Providence the church had 118 members and there were 400 inhabitants in the town. The location of the college in the community meant a great deal to the church and led to the building in May, 1775, of the handsome meeting-house on North Main street that still impresses all who look upon it with its great dignity and stern beauty. The cost was \$25,000, and the 'dedication came midway between the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill.'"

Often has the church been called the Baptist cathedral of America. Its plan was drawn by James Gibbs after plans which were executed for the Church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, London. Joseph Brown and James Sumner, architects, adapted the plans and put them into execution. The building is considered an excellent specimen of colonial architecture.

Here were held the funeral solemnities which were observed when news reached Providence of the death of President Washington. Manifestations of grief were everywhere. Amid muffled drums, pealing cannon, and tolling bells the procession marched from Broad Street to the house of Colonel Jeremiah Olney, where the bier lay; and from there, with its symbolic burden, the procession marched to the Baptist meeting-house, where, from a pulpit draped in black, Colonel George R. Burrill delivered the funeral oration. Beneath



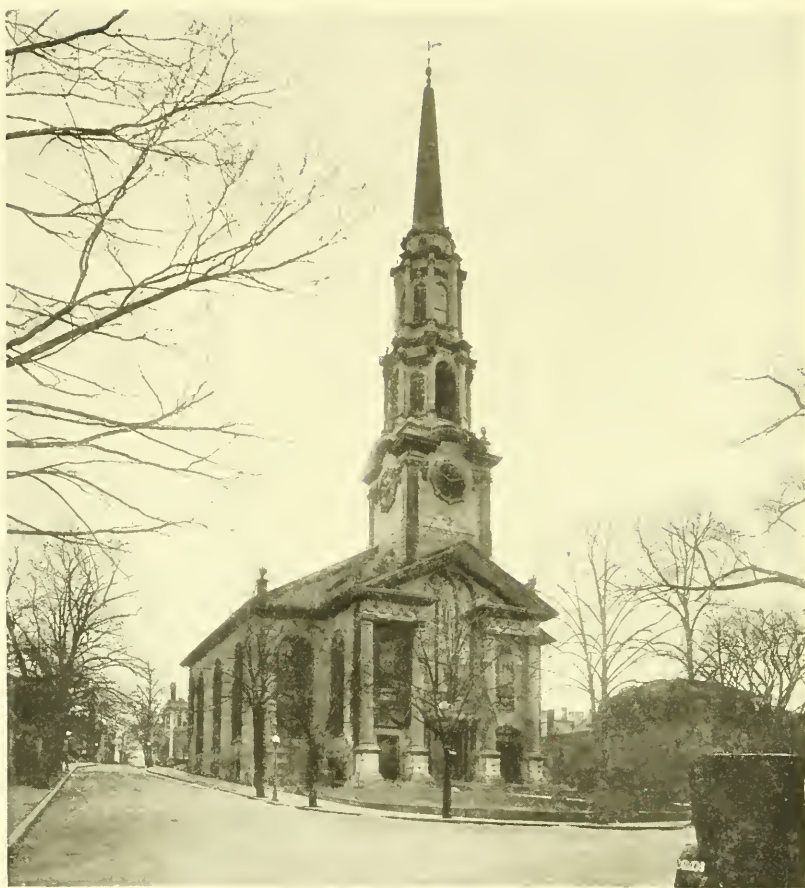
*From a photograph*

#### THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN AMERICA

him lay the bier, partially concealed by a mourning-piece representing a pedestal on which was a representation of the urn containing the sacred ashes of Washington, guarded by three angels. The motto was, "Sacred to the memory of the illustrious Washington."

The entire ceremony was carried out with the preciseness of a military funeral. Half-hour guns pealed at sunset, and the bells tolled their solemn notes until curfew time.





*From a photograph*

## **"AN OLD NEW ENGLAND MEETING HOUSE"**

*First Congregational Church of Providence. Built 1816*

On an elevation which commands a view of the west side of the city of Providence the First Congregational Church faces Benefit Street in stately dignity. For more than a hundred years has it been a sentinel there, and during this time the bell in the tower has summoned the people to worship. This bell, the largest and heaviest cast by Paul Revere and his son at Canton, Massachusetts, was placed in the steeple on August 16, 1816.





The church occupies the same site as did the one built in 1795 and burned in 1814. The original church-members built in 1723 the edifice, which became later the Old Town House, located where the Court House now stands. When the present church edifice was first occupied, only the minister's room could be heated. From its great fireplace, just before service, coals were taken and placed in the individual foot-warmers of the pews. Many families brought their own embers from home. In those days the church was lighted by candles, which at times provokingly dripped from the chandelier, to the discomfiture of the pew-holders in that vicinity.

From the time of its erection until the close of the Civil War the spacious lawn around the front of the church was enclosed with a fine old fence, which had three gates, ornamented with urns corresponding to those on the church-spire.

Dr. Lord recalls a local tradition concerning the organ of the church, which asserts (though for this statement he does not vouch) that the organ is the first that was used by any Congregational society in this country. Most of the pipes were saved from the fire of 1814; and some of them, from the original instrument of 1794, are probably still in use.

"John H. Greene," says Dr. Lord, "was the designer and builder of many of the fine old houses of Providence, such as the Sullivan Dorr house, 109 Benefit Street, the Beckwith house, corner of Benefit and College Streets, and the house now owned by Mrs. John Carter Brown on Benevolent Street, opposite our Parish House. He also designed and built St. John's Church, Dexter Asylum, and the first meeting-house of the Universalists. But he regarded this church as his masterpiece, and was proud of its every detail, as appears in his account of the building preserved in our parish records.

"The exterior of the church today, now that the original white-glass, small-paned windows have been happily restored, is practically the same as it was in 1816, with the difference of a few feet in the height of the steeple, the top of which was blown off in the great gale of 1836. John Greene, although conforming generally to the prevalent style of Georgian architecture in his buildings, was something of a genius, and here and there added touches of daring, but, in the opinion of some of the best judges, successful, originality. This appears in the row of large single windows of our church instead of the double row of smaller windows which characterizes other New England churches; and the outstanding circles of columns on the spire, of which there are only one or two other instances in the country."

The interior of the church is practically unchanged, its most impressive feature being the mahogany pulpit.



From a print

Coll. of R. I. Hist. Soc.

## THE MANSION HOUSE

*Where Washington, Adams, Lafayette, Monroe, and in More Recent Times James Russell Lowell were Guests*

The Mansion House still stands on Benefit Street, in dilapidated dignity behind the Old State House. The stranger is told, "There, in the second story, at the right of the balcony, is the room Washington occupied." Other distinguished guests have stayed there. For many years Asa Messer Gammell, class of '41 Brown University, occupied the room which was Washington's. More than a century ago the old hostelry was one of the finest houses of entertainment in Providence. Here many a lady and gentleman of the old school trod the measures of the stately minuet when it was in fashion. For years famous balls and receptions were held in its big hall. Probably the most magnificent were held in 1813. Benefit Street was then called Back Street.

More than a year after the inauguration of President Washington he visited Providence. It was May 29, 1790. A cannon was fired when he entered the harbor, and on his landing he was greeted with salutes and the ringing of church-bells. A large delegation, composed mostly of Brown University students, escorted the distinguished guest to the Golden Ball Tavern, by which name the Mansion House was then known. The President, according to the report of the *Pennsylvania Packet* of August 28, was accompanied by Governor Clinton of New York, Mr. Smith of South Carolina, and three gentlemen of his family, Colonel Humphreys, Major Jackson, and Mr. Nelson.



William Smith, one of the party, kept a diary during the trip, in which he says: "We had a tedious passage to Providence, being seven hours in performing it. The same salute took place as at Newport, but the procession to the tavern was more solemn and conducted with a much greater formality, having troops and music. The Governor of the State was so zealous in his respects that he jumped aboard the packet as soon as she got to the wharf to welcome the President to Providence. The President, with the Governor of the State on his right hand, and Mr. Foster, a Senator in Congress from R. I. on his left, moved in the front ranks; then followed Governor Clinton, Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Blair, myself and three gentlemen of the President's party, viz. Col. Humphreys, Major Jackson and Mr. Nelson."

On the following Thursday the President and his party viewed an East Indiaman, 990 tons, after which they visited John Innes Clarke, John Brown, Governor Fenner, and Governor Bowen. A dinner was served that day in the Old State House, where, in response to the town's address, President Washington said in part: "As under the smiles of Heaven, America is indebted for freedom and independence, rather to the joint exertions of her citizens of the several States, in which it may be your boast to have borne no inconsiderable share, than to the conduct of her Commander-in-Chief, so she is indebted for their support, rather to the continuation of those exertions, than the prudence and ability manifested in the exercise of powers, delegated to the President of the United States. . . . I thank you, gentlemen, for your prayers for my future welfare, and offer you my best wishes for your individual and collective happiness."

President John Adams in the summer of 1797, while on the way to his home in Massachusetts, stopped with his family in Providence, where they were guests at the Mansion House. The President was greeted by the pealing of bells and the roar of cannon, and through thronged streets he was escorted by the Providence Light Dragoons to the famous hostelry. It was during the evening of his visit, after he had viewed the illumination of the college buildings, that Esek Hopkins—worn and old, but in whose heart patriotic fires still burned—visited the President. Then occurred the touching scene already related in connection with the first Commander-in-chief of the American Navy.

Among other distinguished guests at the Mansion House have been President Madison in 1817, General Lafayette in 1824, and in later years James Russell Lowell. All of them occupied Washington's room. The name of the Mansion House has been many times changed, possibly to keep pace with the years which have drifted by it so rapidly, possibly to recall more appropriately "mine host" and "ye olden days."



*From a photograph*

## THE OLD STATE HOUSE

*Known as the Independence Hall of Providence*

The Old State House on North Main Street was built in 1761, was first occupied the following year, and was used as a "Court and State House by the Colony and State of Rhode Island and Providence





Plantations" until 1900. In the historic old building—appropriately called the Independence Hall of Providence—an act was passed on May 4, 1776, "constituting Rhode Island the first free and independent Republic in America and asserting her absolute independence of England, two months before the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia."

Memorable events have occurred in this Hall of Independence, the history of which is so closely woven with that of this nation. Washington probably visited the Old State House on each of his trips to Providence. When he came in March, 1781, *en route* from Newport, where he went to consult General Rochambeau on military affairs, he was given a dinner at the Old State House, at which thirteen toasts were drunk. It was during this visit that the men, women, and children, who thronged the streets, pressed so close to his carriage that he was obliged to stop every few minutes.

Count Dumas, who accompanied General Washington to Providence, says in his Memoirs that Washington was very much affected by these demonstrations, and that, pressing Count Dumas' hand, he said, "We may be beaten by the English: it is the chance of war; but behold an army which they can never conquer!" The army referred to was a group of children carrying torches, and eagerly calling out to the Father of the Country, whose coach they completely surrounded.

Again, in August, 1790, in the Old State House a dinner was served in honor of Washington. There were two hundred plates laid; and, as nine years before, thirteen toasts were drunk. "The Congress of the United States" was the first; "The President of the United States," the second; "The Governor of the State," the third; "The King and National Assembly of France," "Lafayette," "The Fair Daughters of America," and "The Town of Providence" followed. When the town of Providence had been pledged in "good old Providence rum," the President and his party left the State House and hastened to the New York boat, on which they sailed at four o'clock.

Lafayette was received at the State House, August 23, 1824. The gallant Frenchman was met several miles out of Providence by a delegation of citizens, and was at once escorted to the State House, where, bowing low to the people who had gathered outside to greet him, with tear-dimmed eyes he paused at the door. Just as he was about to enter, he saw near him Captain Stephen Olney, who had served with him during the Revolution. Lafayette folded the old soldier in his arms, and pressed a kiss on either cheek.

After meeting Governor Fenner and the guests assembled in the State House, Lafayette came out of the building, and shook hands with hundreds of persons who had waited to meet him, and among them were many women and children who had waved handkerchiefs and scattered roses when he entered the town.



From a photograph by John R. Hess

### THE JOHN BROWN HOUSE

*"The most magnificent and elegant private mansion that I have ever seen on this continent."*—John Quincy Adams

"The richest merchant in Providence," said the Duke de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, a French nobleman, who journeyed through the greater part of America in 1795-97, "is John Brown, brother to Moses, the Quaker. In one part of the town he has accomplished things that, even in Europe, would appear considerable. At his own expense he had opened a passage through the hill to the river, and has there built wharves, houses, an extensive distillery, and even a bridge, by which the road from Newport to Providence is shortened at least a mile." At the end of this bridge mentioned by the French writer, John Brown placed a statue of President Washington, whom he greatly admired.

John Brown in 1786 built on Power Street the splendid mansion which to-day bears his name. For many years it was occupied by the Gammell family. Marsden J. Perry purchased the house in 1901, and in it are housed his great collection of Shaksperiana and a collection of Chippendale furniture that is considered the most notable in this country.

John Brown, the third of the "four brothers," was the leader in the *Gaspee* plot; and with his brothers he was active in the interests



of Brown University. It was he who sent the *General Washington*, the first ship from the port of Providence, to the East Indies. His famous colonial mansion, unchanged, is considered one of the most beautiful residences in the country. Gigantic elms surround it. The entrance to the grounds through solid mahogany gates is impressive. The bricks of which the three-story house is built are said to have been brought from England on John Brown's own ships, while the mahogany for the interior came from St. Domingo. The house was designed by John Brown's brother Joseph, who also was the architect of the Market House and helped in designing the plans for the Baptist church.

For many years John Brown lived on South Main Street, next to Nicholas, his eldest brother. The Power Street house on which is inscribed, "This house founded by John Brown, Esq., 1786," was not formally opened until the first of January, 1788, when the merchant's eldest daughter was married. The announcement of the ceremony appeared in the *Providence Gazette*: "On Tuesday evening last was married, John Francis, Esq., merchant, to Miss Abby Brown, Daughter of John Brown, Esq.: a young Lady whose truly amiable Disposition and engaging manners cannot fail to adorn and dignify the conubial state."

Hospitality was freely given at the stately mansion, and many noted guests have been received there, among them General Washington. Commencement dinners were notable affairs, and there is a tradition that at a party given for the alumni of Brown University, among whom were numerous clergymen, Obadiah Brown, son of Joseph, proposed the toast,—

"Here's to a short respite to the damned in hell!"

The dead silence which ensued was broken by the host.

"Truly," said he, "gentlemen, a most admirable sentiment in which we can all heartily join!"

An interesting note is made by Staples in his *Annals of the Town of Providence* to the effect that "John Brown, one of the most worthy merchants of Providence, or, in fact, of New England, appeared in January, 1789, dressed in cloth made from the fleeces of his own flocks." The newspaper from which Staples took his note adds that "the yarn was spun by a woman eighty-eight years of age." This was done by Mr. Brown to encourage home-manufacture of clothing, since duties on imported goods were then high.

"Mr. Brown," says A. M. Eaton, "strenuously supported the union of the States and served two years in Congress. His influence was largely instrumental in securing the tardy ratification by this State of the Constitution of the United States, his broad mind having always foreseen and urged the benefits of closer union when the feeble ties of the Confederacy failed. Tradition tells how, upon the day when the final vote of the Convention was to be taken, he secured the



loss of one vote by the party opposed to the adoption of the Constitution by kindly lending his horse and chaise to a member from the country and elder of a church, in order that he might drive out and preach that day."

As lasting, and impressive too, as are the events of his active life, is the memorial in stone on Power Street where the little weather-beaten statues still guard the gate-posts. It is an old tradition that, when these statues hear the clock strike twelve, they bow to each other—and turn to stone again. Many a child has patiently watched, during the century past, in front of them as the clock pealed, and waited for the event which never happened.

### THE JOSEPH BROWN HOUSE

*Here lived French Officers during the Revolution*

Joseph Brown was the second of the "four brothers." He is best remembered as an architect of no little distinction. His house, the entrance of which is changed, stands to-day on South Main Street, No. 72. It was designed and built by him in 1774, and is now occupied by the Providence National Bank. It is an interesting fact that the first president of this bank was John Brown, that the presidents who succeeded him have been largely drawn from his descendants, and that the bank itself occupies the house of John Brown's brother.

"It is related," says a chronicler, "that at one time, when many French officers were quartered in Providence, one of these gallant fellows, doubtless after a good dinner and perhaps on a wager, rode his spirited charger up the flight of steps shown in the view of the old mansion, and into the spacious hall that leads through the house. The horse was unwilling to make the descent of the long, steep flight of steps, and was therefore taken through the great rear door of the hall into the grounds adjoining, where then stood a superb old pear-tree, under which General Washington once sat and regaled himself with the luscious fruit."

When the French came to Providence, the "four brothers"—Nicholas, Joseph, John, and Moses Brown—lived there. They were active in making the troops comfortable, using their influence to procure University Hall and many of the private houses. The French reached Rhode Island for the third time in 1782. They did not, as in 1778, come to fight the British, nor, as in 1780 and 1781, did they come as protectors. They came this cold November to encamp until preparations could be made for their return to France. Count de Rochambeau asked for grounds for his six thousand troops in Providence, and this request was granted by the governor, who gave them a part of North Providence,—ground now marked by a bronze tablet. The troops were in camp less than a month. Many of the officers





stayed in town, and were quartered with various families. Many did as did Joseph Brown,—gave up their homes to the French guests.

Count Ségur, who was among the officers, in his *Memoirs* recalls the stay in Providence: "Providence must now be a large city, and might already, at that time, have been considered a pretty little town. It then only contained 3000 inhabitants; but all were in easy circumstances, which they owed to assiduous labor and active industry. It is situated in the middle of a valley watered by the water of the Narragansett, which is tolerably wide and navigable.

"Our army was encamped on the road to Boston, three miles from Providence. The autumn was like winter, the cold was sharp and the snow fell in abundance. As we were not yet certain as to the time of our departure, which might still be very much protracted, M. de Rochambeau caused barracks to be built for the soldiers, and allowed Colonels to lodge in private houses, where everyone eagerly offered an asylum. . . . M. de Rochambeau gave several balls and assemblies at Providence, which were attended by all the neighborhood within ten leagues of that city. I do not recollect to have seen anywhere an assemblage in which a greater degree of mirth prevailed without confusion, in which there was a greater number of pretty women, and married people living together happily—a greater proportion of beauty free from coquetry; a more complex mixture of persons of all classes, whose conduct and manners presented an equal degree of decorum, which obliterated all appearance of unpleasant contrast or distinction."

James Manning, president of Brown University, in a letter to Rippon Manning, August 3, 1784, records the appointment of Joseph Brown as professor of experimental philosophy in the college.

### THE JOHN CARTER BROWN HOUSE

*Where was a Collection of Americana valued at more than a Million Dollars*

John Carter Brown was a member of the firm of Brown & Ives. From his father, the benefactor of Brown University, he inherited large business interests and a fortune. Destiny had made John Carter Brown a merchant. Inclination made him a great collector of books. Early in life he began to collect rare and curious volumes, and travelled far to procure them, expending a large fortune. In spite of the fact that he had gathered a costly collection of Americana, he was always generous in placing it at the disposal of those who wished to use it. In some instances he sent volumes across the Atlantic,—volumes which, had they been lost, could never have been replaced. "In one instance," said Mr. John R. Bartlett, who prepared an early catalogue of the collection, "this was done to meet the wishes of



From a photograph

#### THE JOHN CARTER BROWN HOUSE

Sir Arthur Helps, the historian of *The Spanish Conquest in America*, who in one of the volumes of that work makes a graceful acknowledgment of the unexampled courtesy which he had thus experienced." John Carter Brown, as did his distinguished father, gave liberally to Brown University.

On the death of John Nicholas Brown, son of John Carter Brown, the library, valued at more than a million dollars, was left in charge of his executors, who were authorized to give the collection—provided it remained unbroken and was kept open for the benefit of the public—to an educational institution. A hundred and fifty thousand dollars was set aside for a building in which the library might be placed. The great collection was given to Brown University, and is now in the John Carter Brown Library.

The house in which John Carter Brown's Americana were stored is on the corner of Power and Benefit Streets. It was built by Joseph Nightingale about 1791, and in 1814 Nicholas Brown bought it. This house and the John Brown house opposite were the finest mansions in Providence at the time they were built, and they are to-day two of the finest colonial houses in this country.



From a photograph by John R. Hess

## THE IVES HOUSE

*Built by a Distinguished Member of the Firm of Brown & Ives*

At the age of thirteen Thomas Poynton Ives became a clerk in the counting-house of Nicholas Brown. Mr. Brown died in 1791; and a few years later, having won the respect of those with whom he was associated in business, Mr. Ives was taken into partnership with the son of his late employer. It has been said of him: "He was foremost among the citizens of Providence, an enterprising and sagacious merchant, a lover of sound learning and pure religion, and a wise and prudent counsellor. He was a man of great natural endowments, which he cultivated by extensive reading and by acquaintance with the leading men of his generation in this country and in foreign lands. The name of his mercantile house was known and respected in the Orient and throughout the marts of Europe, wherever their ships bore in honor the flag of the United States." Mr. Ives married Hope, daughter of Nicholas Brown, for whom Hope College was named.

The house on Power Street was built by Thomas Poynton Ives in 1816 (by some authorities the date is placed twelve years earlier); and it is now occupied by Robert H. Ives Goddard. Near by, at 66



Williams Street, is the Edward Carrington house, still owned and occupied by descendants of the distinguished Carrington family. From this house a splendid view is obtained of the other three houses,—the John Carter Brown, John Brown, and Ives houses,—which with the Carrington mansion make, it is authentically stated, the most beautiful colonial group in this country. It is significant, too, that these three families have played a distinguished part in the history of Providence.

To Mr. Robert H. Ives, a descendant of Thomas Poynton Ives, ex-Governor Royal C. Taft, for many years president of the Merchants Bank, paid the following tribute: "It was my privilege to be closely associated with Mr. Robert H. Ives. . . . No one who came in contact with Mr. Ives in business matters would fail to be impressed with his sagacity and ability, which was universally recognized in this community. No advice was more eagerly sought than his in times of financial peril. His great influence was freely exerted in promoting such measures as were for the best interests of the community, whether financial or moral; to meet him was a benediction; among my most cherished memories is that I enjoyed his friendship and confidence."

### THE TRUMAN BECKWITH HOUSE

*Truman Beckwith acquired the Larger Part of his Estates after he was Seventy Years of Age*

John Greene designed the Truman Beckwith house. It will also be remembered that he designed the First Congregational Church, the Sullivan Dorr house, the Dexter Asylum, St. John's Church, and Mrs. John Carter Brown's house on Benevolent Street. When the family of Truman Beckwith learned that he was to build his house at the corner of College and Benefit Streets, one of them said, "I can't see why Truman wants to build up there in the lots!" The young merchant knew his own mind, and built "in the lots." The Handicraft Club occupies the house at the present time.

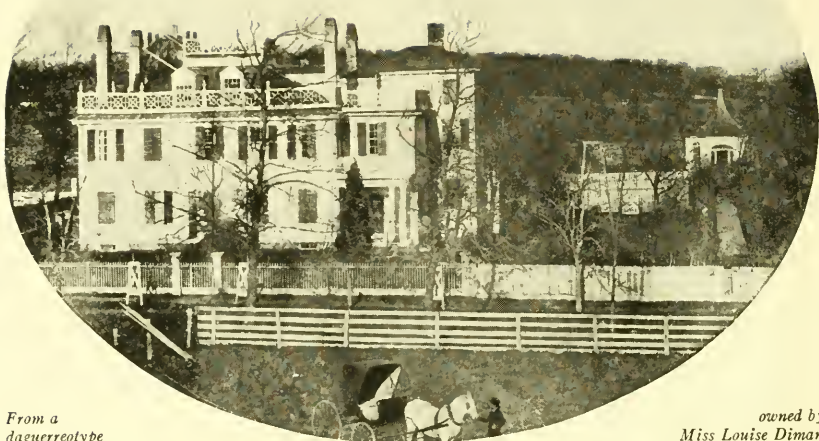
Mr. Beckwith, whose span of life was from 1783 to 1878, lived most of his life in Providence, though in his earlier years mercantile pursuits took him to other cities,—for several years to Savannah, where he bought cotton. In these interests he built a hundred years ago a cotton warehouse on South Water Street. The following year, 1818, he was one of the men who established the Merchants Bank in Providence. Mr. Beckwith pursued varied interests. He had some taste for architecture, and was on the Building Committee that erected the Dexter Asylum in 1827-28 and on that of the What Cheer Building in 1851. He was in the cotton business for fifty-five years, and the larger part of his extensive estate was acquired after he was seventy years of age.



*From a photograph*

THE TRUMAN BECKWITH HOUSE





*From a  
daguerreotype*

*owned by  
Miss Louise Diman*

### THE STIMSON-DIMAN HOUSE

*Once called "Rose Farm" and the Scene of Parties during the Strawberry Season*

Ebenezer Knight Dexter will long be remembered in Providence. The Dexter Asylum, the Dexter Training Ground, and the Dexter Donation Fund were all the result of his forethought. He was but fifty-two years of age when he died. The house, known to-day as the Stimson-Diman House, was built between 1799 and 1803 either by Ebenezer Knight Dexter or by his father, Knight Dexter, for him. Here he resided but a very short time; and the house, after passing through the hands of Ebenezer S. Thomas and Dr. Philip Moser, both of Charleston, South Carolina, was purchased in 1811 by Alexander Jones, who had been living in Charleston, but who was a graduate of Brown University, and had returned to take up his residence in Providence. He named his house Bellevue; and, in order that he might enjoy the excellent view of Newport on clear days, he had his roof arranged in a sort of square, on which was a balustrade with chairs. He lived at Bellevue until 1837.

Mr. John J. Stimson, of Providence, whose grandchildren still own the mansion, in 1837 bought the estate, which then consisted of a square house, with barns and outbuildings, and about four acres of land. Mr. Stimson added a wing on the east side of the house,



## OLD PROVIDENCE



and changed it into a house suitable for two families. The east side with the gardens and barns he kept for himself; while the west side, now fronting on Diman Place, he rented. Mr. Stimson was much interested in gardening and horticulture. He had a large garden and an extensive orchard, in which were all kinds of fruits, including pears, apples, cherries, peaches, quinces, as well as strawberries and vegetables of all kinds. Loveliest of all was his rose-garden, and, because it was so beautiful, the name of the estate was changed from Bellevue to Rose Farm; and by the latter name it was known for many years,—famous for its roses and for the afternoon and evening parties that were held there during the strawberry season. There was an old-fashioned summer-house, to which a box-bordered path led (shown in the accompanying picture).

The summer-house was a perfect specimen of the colonial type. It was papered inside with landscape paper, representing Alpine *chalets* surrounded with borders of roses. A large glass chandelier for candles hung from the centre of the ceiling, and the windows were protected by panelled shutters. Here the strawberry festivals were held.

### THE CARRINGTON HOUSE

*From a photograph*







In 1860 Mr. Stimson died, and Mrs. Stimson in 1882, leaving the estate to their daughter, who married Professor J. Lewis Diman, of Brown University. She made the place her home until her death in 1901. The house in 1876 was restored to its original plan,—a single house instead of a double one. The front door was again placed in the centre in 1887. The photograph shows the house as it was in 1853, with the entrance at the southeast corner of the piazza. For many years no other house could be seen from the Stimson-Diman house, and only two or three between it and Prospect Street on one side and the Seekonk River on the other. In 1881 the larger part of the old garden was cut up into house lots, and a new street laid through, which was called Stimson Avenue. The house to-day is on the corner of Angell Street and Diman Place.



*From a photograph*

### THE ATHENÆUM

*Scene of Poe's Visits and Possessor of the Costliest Miniature in America*

The real foundation of the Providence Athenæum was laid in 1753. The home of the old Providence Athenæum from 1831 to 1836 was in rooms 42 and 44 in the second story of the Arcade. This was also





the home of the present institution from 1836 to 1838. Nicholas Brown, Moses B. Ives, and Robert H. Ives in 1836 gave the land on which the building now stands to the Athenæum; and they further offered \$6,000 for the erection of a building, provided \$10,000 was raised for the same purpose, with an additional \$4,000 for books, provided the same sum was raised by "societies" (then made up of the Athenæum, Historical, and Franklin Societies). On April 4, 1837, the ground was broken, and the following May the building was begun. The Historical Society did not occupy the room set aside for it, and the Franklin Society did not long remain in the building. So the Athenæum came into full possession of the building in 1849.

The Athenæum has been made a depository of valuable books, as well as the recipient of many book funds and works of art. Among the latter are "A Girl reading," by Sir Joshua Reynolds; a portrait of Sarah Helen Whitman, by C. G. Thompson; portraits of Zachary Taylor, James G. Percival, and Cyrus Butler. The greatest treasure is a miniature,—Malbone's "The Hours," said to be not only the greatest work of the artist, but also the most valuable miniature in America. In 1881 this miniature and several portraits were stolen, which places Providence in the list of cities and the Athenæum in the list of galleries that have been visited by robbers of art treasures.

The pictures were traced to Brooklyn, New York, and were returned to the Athenæum. The miniature, which had been torn from its frame, but was otherwise uninjured, was also found.

In the Athenæum is an interesting reminder of the days when Edgar Allan Poe visited Providence. Dr. H. L. Koopman, librarian of Brown University, who is deeply interested in Poe, had heard that Mrs. Whitman, to whom Poe was at that time engaged, had expressed admiration for an anonymous poem that appeared in the *American Review* in December, 1847. At the time she and Poe were in the Athenæum, and Mrs. Whitman asked Poe if he had read this poem "Ullume" and if he knew the author. He answered her questions in the affirmative, and acknowledged that he had not only read the poem, but had written it. Before leaving the Athenæum, he signed the poem. Dr. Koopman had heard this story, and by way of verifying it went to the Athenæum, and looked up the issue of the *American Review* in which it was supposed to have appeared. The magazine was found, and also the signature.

"The purpose and aim of the Providence Athenæum," as has been stated, "shall be to furnish a home library, larger, better arranged, more useful and more attractive than that within the means of any individual shareholder; and the scope of its growth, the acquisition of books of general literature and other works, publications and periodicals in literature or art which conduce to general culture, to the



exclusion of any publication of a purely technical or professional character, which latter shall only be purchased from funds especially given for such purpose."



*From a photograph*

### THE EDWARD DEXTER HOUSE

*Here lived Colonel Dexter, Famous for his Protracted Lawsuits*

Edward Dexter was born in North Providence, and there lived on his mother's farm, near the Pawtucket turnpike, until he was sixteen years old. Among his childish recollections were encampments of the French troops in Providence and the visits of Lafayette. At sixteen he became a clerk in the counting-house of Welcome Arnold, a merchant of Providence; and it was his good fortune, while so employed, to twice rescue Mr. Arnold from drowning in the harbor, where they both were looking out for their shipping. He passed through varied experiences after he had gone into business for himself. Fifteen of these years he followed the seas, and was master of his own cargoes. He was at Guadeloupe in 1805 when the yellow fever, small-pox, and plague destroyed some forty thousand French



troops; and, while the troops of France were dying by thousands, Edward Dexter remained unscathed. Possibly he decided that he had had enough foreign travel, for the following year he stayed at home and resumed his business life.

The house which he built about 1796 is now at 72 Waterman Street, and is the residence of Dr. Day. Its first location was on George Street, from which it was moved to its present site. In earlier years Professor Blake resided in it, and still later Mr. Pendleton, who kept there his famous collection of colonial furniture.

Colonel Dexter from 1811 to 1817 was a member of the staff of Governor William Jones. He was an able business man, and during his career as such owned seventeen different ships, with a partial ownership in several others. It is said that he had more lawsuits than any other man in Rhode Island. Most of these concerned land, and it was a boast of Colonel Dexter that he was always sure that he was right before he began litigations. Abraham Payne, in his *Reminiscences of the Rhode Island Bar*, recalls a famous case: "Dexter Randall was Col. Edward Dexter's attorney. He was as such uniformly successful. He kept up a protracted litigation with the city of Providence for nearly a generation, and gave the Mumford meadow a local celebrity not inferior to that of the field of Runnymede, where the barons contended successfully with King John. Colonel Dexter had, I think, a life estate in this meadow as tenant by courtesy. He brought a suit against the city for turning the water upon this land and destroying his crops, and recovered damages. He also brought an action against an aqueduct company for draining water from the land, and so preventing the growth of his crops. . . . After a time counsel and client fell out, and the result was a lawsuit between Colonel Dexter and Mr. Randall on an account. These accounts covered a period of some 30 years, and embraced a great many items. Far back into the past was a charge in Colonel Dexter's account of sundry bushels of corn. Upon inquiry by Mr. Randall he explained these items in this way. He said that he was formerly accustomed to play at whist with Colonel Dexter, Colonel Simons, editor of the *Republican Herald*, and a fourth whose name I have forgotten, and that the stakes were bushels of corn. This case was referred to John P. Knowles as auditor, who reported a large balance in favor of Mr. Randall, who was paid by the executor of Mr. Dexter."

In 1858, when Colonel Dexter had reached his eighty-eighth year, he prepared a tin cylinder, in which, after taking precautions to protect it from decay, he placed copies of his genealogical chart, and ordered that it be buried with his remains in the tomb which he erected in the Old North Burying Ground.



*From a photograph*

## THE HALSEY MANSION

*Where Wild "Tom" Halsey, Jr., kept Live Terrapins in the Cellar*

Colonel Thomas Lloyd Halsey, who served in the Revolutionary War, built in 1801 his house on Prospect Street, a little beyond Barnes. His farm lands surrounded it, and stretched as far as Hope Street, taking in the land of the Friends' School and the reservoir site. The Halsey house is standing to-day, but greatly changed.

The elder Halsey left a Memorandum that began at the time of his "leaving Providence during the Revolutionary War with Great Britain in the month of July 1777 to Go with [his] family to France as the Agent of the Owners of the Privateers Fitted out by the Merchants of New England." Colonel Halsey speaks in this Memorandum of the embarkation of the French troops in December, 1782, on the Marquis Vaudreuil squadron in Boston Harbor. "I boxed up in pine boxes," he said, "their Arms, made the Officers 400 English hammocks. Such was my fatigue Night & Day that very night I finished my Labour of Embarkation of the French Army I had my Boots cut off my Legs they swelled so much & I went to bed at Mr. Joshua Brackets Tavern in School Street & I never moved to make





## OLD PROVIDENCE



my Bed for 21 days, nor ever left the House till March 25, 1783 & I was attended by Dr. Charles Jarvis with great care and success. When I left Mr. Bracketts on the 25 March, 1783, in Mr. Sam'l Breck's chariot I was not able to leave my House till near a Month afterwards."

Young Tom Halsey, son of Colonel Halsey, in 1812 asked the government at Washington to appoint him consul of the United States at Buenos Ayres. The communication which was despatched spoke highly of young Halsey, and was signed by many of the leading men of Providence. The petition stated that Mr. Halsey spoke fluently both Spanish and French, that he knew Buenos Ayres well,—for there he conducted a mercantile establishment,—and that his character was without reproach.

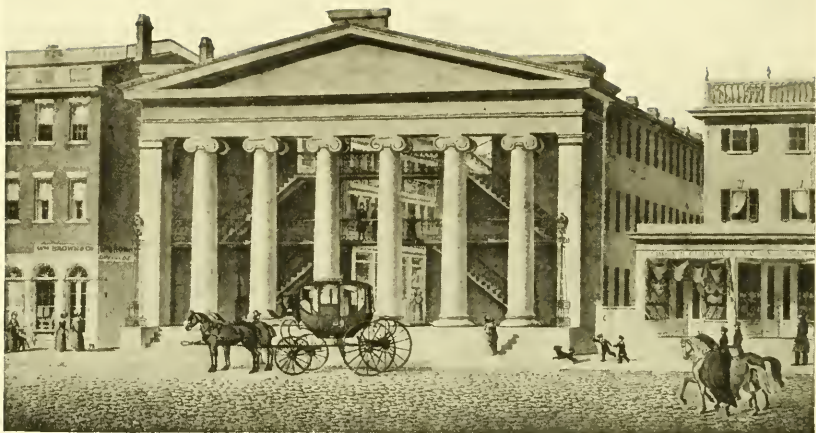
The cream of the estate and the greater portion of a fortune accumulated during a lifetime of frugality were left by Colonel Halsey to his son. The estate was left to itself for many years, and the master lived in Buenos Ayres. Tom Halsey's "later life," said Simon S. Bucklin of Bristol, once the secretary of Henry Clay, "was spent in Providence. He lived for pleasure only. *A bon vivant!* No man lived higher than he. He loved terrapin soup, and I recollect that he used to keep the live terrapins in the cellar of the mansion house on Prospect street."

The fight over the Halsey will, which disposed of an estate valued at about a quarter of a million dollars and claimed by the South American heirs of Halsey as well as his daughter who lived in Providence, lasted from 1855—when the case was carried to the highest courts—until 1899, three years after the daughter's death.

### A REPRESENTATION OF THE GREAT GALE OF 1815 AT PROVIDENCE

*Coll. of R. I. Hist. Soc.*





From a print

Coll. of R. I. Hist. Soc.

## THE ARCADE'

*Said to be the Only One at the Present Time in the United States*

The Arcade years ago was the show-place of Providence,—loved by the children, boasted of by the citizens, and admired by strangers. At the time of its erection in 1827 and 1828 there was scarcely a shop or business place of any kind in its vicinity on Westminster Street. The business section of the town was then on Water Street and North and South Main Streets, then known as Cheapside, where, among others, was the firm of Watson & Gladding (now B. H. Gladding & Co.) at their shop in "The Sign of the Bunch of Grapes." The firm of B. H. Gladding & Co. has the oldest dry-goods store in this country. The Arcade is said to have been suggested by the Madeleine of Napoleon in Paris, and at the time when it was built several others were erected in the United States. The Providence Arcade is said to be the only one remaining. It is built of granite, and fronts on Westminster Street on the north and Weybosset Street on the south.

It is still a boast that one of the thirteen columns, each weighing twelve tons, and, with the exception of those in the cathedral of St. John the Divine, the largest in America, was blasted out of the Bear Rock Ledge on the borders of the town of Johnston, and completed by the workmen in thirty days. James Olney agreed to haul the monoliths to Providence; and, after constructing a special low gear and strengthening the bridge at Olneyville, he guided fifteen yoke of oxen, drawing their burden of twelve tons, through the woods. One column

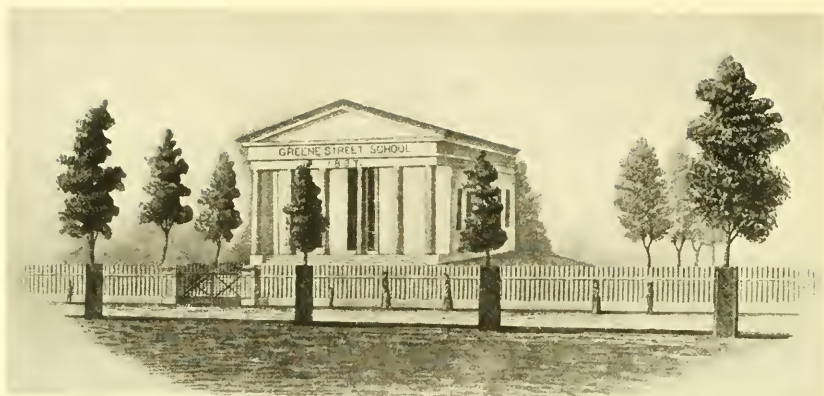


was broken in moving; and, after replacing it and getting the twelve others into place, the contractor announced that he was practically ruined. The broken column now stands on the Field lot in the Old North Burying Ground. When six of these pillars had been left near the Weybosset Street bridge, the architects of the Arcade, Russell Warren and James Bucklin, assisted in placing them. Major Bucklin had the oversight of the setting of each one. This task was accomplished in a single day. One man only was hurt when the building was constructed; and, during the actual time the work was carried on, one man was killed. The Arcade cost \$145,000. The east half was owned by Cyrus Butler, and the west half by the Arcade Corporation.

The fashionable folk of Providence were delighted with the fine things found in the Arcade displays,—forerunners of the modern department store,—and the shop particularly visited was that of the “three sisters,” milliners. These sisters were devoted members of St. John’s Church, and deeply respected in Providence. The story is told of a member of that church who returned her bonnet to the milliners, asking that the bow on it be “changed to the congregation side,” as its beauty was wasted on a blank wall.

At the time of the great September gale the milliners were hastening, with a brother who was very ill, from their home on Mathewson and Weybosset Streets, when the carriage in which they were taking him out of the reach of a rapidly rising tide was overturned, and it was with great difficulty that he was rescued from the water. A neighbor on her return home, after the flood had subsided, complained that her parlor carpet was ruined with dead fish and slime, and that she found a “little dead swine” on top of her piano!

The “three sisters,” as age was creeping on, sold their shop in the Arcade and moved to a rose-covered cottage (of which maybe they had dreamed) in the country, where, called familiarly Aunt Ria and Aunt Patty, they were the fairy godmothers of the community. Many a child climbed their haircloth sofa, read the books so eagerly loaned, and sat in their living-room, while marvellous doll’s clothes were designed from a never-failing supply of scraps of bright-colored silks. “Aunt Patty was very lame,—a misstep on the stairs had caused this,—so that she seldom went farther than her own garden. She was a dear, familiar figure to the villagers, seated on her little green wooden stool, weeding, or leaning on her cane to examine some of the new blossoms, while the winds played with her soft white curls, on either side of her sweet old face. . . . Beneath the front steps dwelt a toad, which was very tame, and sat blinking in the sun while some child fed it with rose-bugs. . . . At last, growing too feeble to keep house longer, they moved again to town.”



*From a print*

*Coll. of R. I. Hist. Soc.*

## THE GREENE STREET SCHOOL

*Associated with Ralph Waldo Emerson and Margaret Fuller*

At the opening of Colonel Hiram Fuller's School on Greene Street, Saturday, June 10, 1837, Ralph Waldo Emerson delivered the address of dedication, though the papers of the day give little information concerning either the speaker or address other than to say that it "was transcendental and scarcely intelligible in parts, though some portions were much admired." His language, according to the report, was clothed "in seven-fold mysteries of thrice-wreathed mysticism."

In this school Margaret Fuller taught, and it was by her and not by Colonel Fuller—who was in no way related to her—that Ralph Waldo Emerson was persuaded to come to Providence. During the period in which she taught in Providence (1837-39) glimpses of the life of this remarkable woman—who stimulated in this country the study of German literature, was the friend of Emerson, Lowell, and Hawthorne, and whose Memoirs after her tragic death were edited by Ralph Waldo Emerson, James Freeman Clarke, and William Ellery Channing—are caught from the letters she wrote to her friends and particularly to her sister.

In June, 1837, she wrote to Mr. Emerson from Providence: "Concord, dear Concord, haven of repose, where headache, vertigo, and other sins that flesh is heir to, cannot long endure."

Miss Fuller taught geography, French, Latin, and possibly German to the advanced pupils. At the time when she decided to go to Providence, she speaks of preferring to write a Life of Goethe. "Yet," she adds, "when the thousand petty difficulties which surround us are considered, it seems unwise to relinquish immediate independence." This "independence" to her meant a salary of a thousand dollars a year.





The Greene Street School—to-day standing in a dilapidated state a half-mile from its former situation—in 1837 was at the east corner of Washington and Greene Streets, on a site now occupied by a brick dwelling-house. Shortly after Colonel Fuller's resignation in 1842, the school was discontinued. Soon afterward the building was removed to its present location on the southern side of Point Street.

May Day in 1838 was observed by the Greene Street School, when the pupils, led by the king (William B. Gladding) and his aides, and the queen (Eliza Hoppin) and her maids of honor, marched from the school to "The Grotto" on the Moses Brown farm. The procession marched from Greene Street to Westminster Street, across Market Square, to Cheapside and Meeting Street and Angell Street. The ceremony at "The Grotto" has been described as very effective, and immensely enjoyed by the guests who had assembled to witness the coronation of the May Day king and queen. Margaret Fuller in honor of the occasion composed a song, which was sung to the accompaniment of a flute. The first verse follows:—

"O, blessed be this sweet May day,  
The fairest of the year,  
The birds are heard from every spray,  
And the blue sky smiles so clear;  
White blossoms deck the apple-tree,  
Blue violets the plain;  
Their fragrance tells the wilding bee  
That spring is come again.  
We'll cull the blossoms from the bough,  
Where robins gaily sing,  
We'll wreath them for our queen's pure brow,  
We'll wreath them for our king."

## THE AUTON HOUSE

*Where Thomas Cole Hoppin brought up his Famous Family*

"My mother," says Augustus Hoppin in his *Recollections of Auton House*, "had twelve Auton-babies. One failed to attain maturity, and that left eleven. They arrived in the following order: J. Auton, A. Auton (girl), T. Auton, S. Auton (girl), F. Auton, H. Auton, E. Auton (girl), W. Auton, A. Auton, H. Auton (girl), C. Auton."

*Auton* is a Greek word, meaning self, and used by Mr. Hoppin in the sense of ourselves. As such he chose to designate his family. No lover of Providence history should fail to read his book, which is as interesting and as thoroughly charming as the story of the Alcott family of Concord. It requires a considerable stretch of the imagination, when the stranger to-day views the Auton House at the upper corner of Westminster and Walnut Streets, to place it in the midst of



*From a photograph*

#### THE AUTON HOUSE

spacious grounds. It is now in the heart of the commercial district, and is the home of the Providence Wall Paper Company. "It was built," according to information given by Mr. William W. Chapin, "in 1807 by Isaac Greenwood, who removed to Boston in 1810, first advertising his house for sale, and saying in the advertisement that it had been built three years before. The house was bought by Benjamin Hoppin, brother of Thomas C.; and in 1815 Benjamin conveyed it to Thomas C. The family occupied it until the death of Mrs. Hoppin in 1874. The interior of the house has been changed



beyond recognition, except that in the shop of the Providence Wall Paper Company there remains the original fan-light over what were old-fashioned folding doors—not sliding doors—separating the two parlors when desired.”

The eldest “Auton” child was William Jones Hoppin, who was named for his maternal grandfather,—William Jones,—from 1811 to 1817 the Governor of Rhode Island. William Hoppin practised law in New York City. For ten years he was engaged in diplomatic service. His brother,—the second “Auton” child,—Thomas F. Hoppin, was an artist, pupil of the famous Paul Delaroche; and among his notable works are the chancel windows depicting the four evangelists in Trinity Church, New York City. He also cast the bronze dog that now stands in Roger Williams Park. This dog formerly stood near the Auton House. It is said to be the first production of this type of art in America, and the first bronze statue to be cast in Rhode Island. Among the other Hoppin brothers were well-known physicians and architects. The girls were socially prominent in Providence. And the entire family was successful in its varied pursuits, some of its members attaining an international prominence.

Augustus Hoppin, besides publishing a goodly number of books, won distinction as an illustrator. Among his best works are the illustrations of the original edition of Oliver Wendell Holmes’s *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, published in 1858.

If Augustus Hoppin were to be entirely forgotten,—which is far from probable,—it might be ardently wished that the fragment of the *Recollections of Auton House* wherein is described his mother might remain: “Mother Auton never would sit at a desk,” he says. “Neither ‘secretary’ nor ‘davenport’ suited her purpose. The little gifts presented to her from time to time, and admirably adapted to write at were always gratefully accepted, but never used. She took her writing materials on her broad, motherly lap, pushed her cap-strings from her face, adjusted her gold spectacles over her ample nose, dipped her pen daintily in the ink (just enough to fill it without blotting), and away it ran so merrily and easily over the paper that she would be on her fourth page before we children, who were seated around her, had half gotten through sucking our oranges. People write letters now, lots of them, heaps of them; but I very much doubt whether they contain one-half the valuable news, the harmless gossip, the genial spirit, which flowed so readily from Mother Auton’s pen.

“There she sat in her chair every Sunday morning for over forty years, writing the weekly epistle, with bended head and benign expression, while the wood fire hissed and sputtered, and the old canary sang in the sunlight.”



*From a photograph*

## THE SULLIVAN DORR HOUSE

*Here lived Thomas Wilson Dorr, Leader of the Dorr War*

Thomas W. Dorr at the time of his efforts to reform suffrage in the State of Rhode Island was comparatively a young man, on the sunny side of forty. He had been elected Governor of Rhode Island under what was known as "the people's Constitution." He and his followers, who were known as "Dorrites," formed a camp at Federal Hill, where they met on May 17, 1842, and from which they marched to the armory, then in the rear of the present court-house. They procured two guns, and went back to camp again. In the mean time a "law and order" party was gathered, which, though it would have benefited from exactly what Thomas Dorr through forcible means was trying to procure, nevertheless was ready to stand by the State, suffrage or no suffrage.

Orders had been issued for the military companies opposing Dorr to turn out when they heard the bells tolling. The signal was given, and the men proceeded to the arsenal. The Dorrites were before them—with guns. Governor Dorr attempted to fire one of them—and failed. This incident calls to mind a verse from one of the two pieces of literature called forth by the events of 1842:—





“The impatient chief looked on with ire,  
Blanched was his cheek, but tenfold fire  
Was flashing in his eye.  
He threw his martial cloak aside,  
And waddling up,—he meant to stride,—  
‘Give me the torch,’ with fury cried,  
‘And d— it, let me try!’”

The large force gathered to oppose him awed Dorr and his company, and they dispersed. Re-enforcements were given the “law and order” party on the following morning. A company of infantry and cadets—in all seven hundred men—marched to the Dorr camp, and demanded that they surrender. This was done, and Governor Dorr left the State. Another attempt was made by his party when they formed a camp several miles from Providence, at Acote’s Hill. The measures taken by the State were then more rigorous, and Dorr was brought back to the city, tried for treason, and sentenced. A few years before his death he was liberated, and passed the rest of his life in retirement at the Dorr mansion on Benefit Street. His death occurred on December 27, 1854. A plain marble slab marks his resting-place in Swan Point Cemetery.

The Dorr mansion was built in 1809–10 by Sullivan Dorr, father of Thomas Dorr. John H. Greene was the designer. It is said to have been built on the model of Pope’s villa at Twickenham. “The Sullivan Dorr house,” says Miss Kimball, “has a remarkably beautiful staircase. Its mural decorations are probably unique among the Rhode Island houses. They extend along the upper and lower halls, and the drawing-room, above the low wainscoting, and are the work of a Neapolitan artist, who visited Providence in 1810.

At the rear of the mansion is a monument marking the grave of Williams and six members of his family, on the original home lot of the founder of Providence. The location of the grave from the time of Williams’s death in 1683 until 1860 was unmarked, and for many years it was not known. When the grave was finally opened, neither the coffin nor the remains were found. The root of an apple-tree had apparently twined itself around the body of Williams, following his backbone and branching off at his hips and legs until it reached the toes. The root was carefully dug up, and preserved.



## OLD HOWARD HALL

*Where Thackeray lectured and Jenny Lind sang*

Thackeray, when he lectured in Providence in 1853, said that, when he was a pupil at the Charter-house School, he found, cut on a beam there, "R. W.," probably the work of Roger Williams when he was a boy. If all reports are true, Thackeray was not well received in Providence; that is, so far as entertainment is concerned. Howard Hall, where he delivered his lecture on Swift, was crowded, and great attention given the lecturer. "We understand," says the *Providence Journal*, "that it was the largest audience that he ever addressed." Nevertheless, there was something lacking. Eyre Crowe, Thackeray's private secretary, recalls the Providence trip: "The journey was easy, the audience large and appreciative. This was on Dec. 22, when the nights were getting chilly. It was, therefore, a little rough upon those fond of their cheerful cigar to be compelled, as most of them were, to content themselves with a discussion on the benefits conferred upon the State by liquor laws prohibiting the sale of alcoholic drinks. Everybody, I noticed, went to bed early. I only sketched a pair of bluchers whose shadow was cast upon the sleeper's room door outside of the hotel. I can therefore only mention Providence *apropos de bottes*."

Many celebrities appeared at Howard Hall. Wendell Phillips lectured there, also Daniel Webster, Henry Ward Beecher, Charles Sumner, Artemus Ward, John G. Saxe, George William Curtis, Bayard Taylor, and Edgar Allan Poe. On January 4, 1854, William Lloyd Garrison lectured, and on January 31 of the same year Sam Houston. Tom Thumb and his wife made a farewell appearance there in 1876. Twenty-one years prior to this Adelina Patti sang. Ole Bull played there.

Perhaps the most noteworthy event which occurred in Old Howard Hall (the first building was erected in 1847, and destroyed November 15, 1853) was a concert given by Jenny Lind. The hall was too small to accommodate the persons who wished to attend the concert. Forbes's Museum, which was close to the hall, received a part of the immense crowd that waited for seats; and from its windows where the people were seated the singer was heard very well. Jenny Lind was given a tremendous greeting in Providence, and it was here that a seat in the Old Howard Hall brought the record price paid in America. New York had sold a seat as high as \$225; Boston, \$625; Philadelphia, \$625; New Orleans, \$240; but a Providence man paid \$653 for his seat. So pleased was the singer with the compliment that she autographed the ticket.

After the first building was burned in 1853, a second was erected on the same spot in 1854. This eventually gave way to the present Howard Building on the same site, Westminster and Dorrance Streets.



From a photograph

Coll. of Mrs. Henry R. Chace

## THE WHITMAN HOUSE

*Here Edgar Allan Poe wooed Sarah Helen Whitman*

Edgar Allan Poe lectured in Providence, visited Providence, carried on his courtship with Mrs. Whitman in Providence, and, if all accounts may be credited, left a part of his heart in Providence. His first appearance occurred during a trip from Boston to New York in the year 1845.

It was a moonlight night, and very warm. Poe was wandering about the streets, and in the garden of her Benefit Street home he saw Mrs. Whitman, who eventually became his betrothed and by whom two of his loveliest poems—"To Helen" and "Annabel Lee"—were inspired.

"I saw thee once—once only—years ago:  
I must not say *how* many—but *not* many.  
It was a July midnight; and from out  
A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own soul, soaring,  
Sought a precipitate pathway up through heaven,  
There fell a silvery silken veil of light,  
With quietude, and sultriness, and slumber,



Upon the upturn'd faces of a thousand  
Roses that grew in an enchanted garden. . . .  
Clad all in white, upon a violet bank  
I saw thee half reclining; while the moon  
Fell on the upturn'd faces of the roses,  
And on thine own, upturn'd—alas, in sorrow!"

Some three years after Poe's soul had been stirred so deeply, he met Mrs. Whitman, and during a walk to the Swan Point Cemetery he asked her to marry him. It was in November, 1848, that the daguerreotype, which is considered one of Poe's best likenesses, was made by S. W. Hartshorn, of Providence. This picture Poe gave to Mrs. Whitman, who valued it highly. It is now the property of Brown University.

The story of the broken engagement has been told and retold. The poet had promised Mrs. Whitman that he would not drink again, and he broke his promise. This occurred two days before the date set for the wedding. In vain Poe pleaded, in vain he tried to win her back. Yet, in spite of the estrangement, Mrs. Whitman was absolutely true to the poet's memory, some of her finest verses were inspired by him, and on every occasion she was his defender. In 1859 she published *Edgar Poe and his Critics*. Of this Curtis wrote in *Harper's Weekly*: "In reading the exquisitely tender, subtle, sympathetic, and profoundly appreciative sketch of Edgar Poe, which has just been issued under this title, it is impossible not to remember the brave woman's arm thrust through the slide to serve as a bolt against the enemy. . . . The author with an inexpressible grace, reserve, and tender, heroic charity—having a right which no other person has to speak—tells in a simple, transparent, and quiet strain what she thinks of his career and genius."

It was at the Whitman house, on the northwest corner of Church and Benefit Streets, that Poe spent many of his happiest hours, and one of his saddest hours as well. And it was here that Sarah Helen Whitman lived on, and wrote the inexpressibly beautiful things that have lived after her, among them her pen portrait of Edgar Allan Poe, the first and second stanzas of which follow:—

"After long years I raised the folds concealing  
That face, magnetic as the morning's beam:  
While slumbering memory thrilled at its revealing,  
Like Memnon waking from his marble dream.

"Again I saw the brow's translucent pallor,  
The dark hair floating o'er it like a plume;  
The sweet imperious mouth, whose haughty valor  
Defied all portents of impending doom."





## HOPE COLLEGE

*Among the many notable graduates of Brown University was John Hay, who with John G. Nicolay was private secretary and biographer of Lincoln*

"Where'er afar the beck of fate shall call us,  
'Mid winter's boreal chill or summer's blaze,  
Fond memory's chain of flowers shall still enthrall us,  
Wreathed by the spirits of these vanished days:  
Our hearts shall bear them safe through life's commotion;  
Their fading gleam shall light us to our graves;  
As in the shell the memories of ocean  
Murmur forever of the sounding waves."

*From Hay's Class Poem. Read June 10, 1858.*

Of this class poem, nearly a half-century after John Hay delivered it, William Dean Howells wrote: "To say it was a class poem is sufficiently to characterize it, perhaps; and to add that it was easily better than most class poems is not to praise it overmuch. There was the graceful handling of a familiar measure, and the easy mastery of the forms which a young writer's reading makes his second nature; but it was more than commonly representative of the poet's own thinking and feeling. There was a security of touch in it, though there was not yet the maturity which early characterized his prose, and which is present in a marked degree in his paper on Ellsworth, the young captain of Zouaves who fell in the first months of the Civil War."

Providence is rich in literary associations. William Dean Howells in his young manhood came here, though it is not true—as is somewhat generally believed—that he here won Elinor Mead. Both he and Mrs. Howells were guests in Providence after their marriage; and, on Broadway, a little above Jackson Street, stands the house, removed from its previous location, where he and Mrs. Howells were frequent guests. Nora Perry, who achieved some distinction as a poet, lived in Providence. Here, it is said, James Fenimore Cooper wrote in the Slater mansion a part of *The Red Rover*.

It may have been during his years as student at Brown University that John Hay cherished the idea of being a poet. He came to Providence in the fall of 1855, and took quarters assigned to him in University Hall. With great brown eyes and a shock of auburn hair, he must have been an attractive lad. There seems to have been a general opinion that he tucked his books at night under his pillow, and let the contents of them sink in, for he never was caught studying to any great extent, but was first in his classes. As an upper classman at the university, he met many of the literary men and women of the time, among them Mrs. Whitman, whom he greatly admired, also Nora Perry. The latter years of his student life were spent at room 44 in Hope College.



John Hay was generally respected and loved by his fellow-students. There was a gentle courtesy in his attitude toward those he met, and a modesty, which made his personality a singularly interesting one. And, in his turn, Hay loved Providence. "If you loved Providence," he wrote to Nora Perry after his graduation from Brown University, "as I do, you would congratulate yourself hourly upon your lot. I turn my eyes Eastward, like an Islamite, when I feel prayerful. The city of Wayland and Williams, that smiles upon its beauty glassed in the still mirror of the Narragansett waves, is shrined in my memory as a far-off, mystical Eden, where the women were lovely and spirituelle, and the men were jolly and brave; where I used to haunt the rooms of the Athenæum, made holy by the presence of the royal dead; where I used to pay furtive visits to Forbes' forbidden mysteries (peace to its ashes!); where I used to eat Hasheesh and dream dreams. My life will not be utterly desolate while memory is left me, and while I may recall the free pleasures of the student-time; pleasures in which there was no taint of selfishness commingled, and which lost half their sin in losing all their grossness. Day is not more different from night than they were from the wild excesses of the youth of this barbarian West."

Of this life which dreamed its youthful dreams in and was nurtured by Brown University, Providence is justly proud.

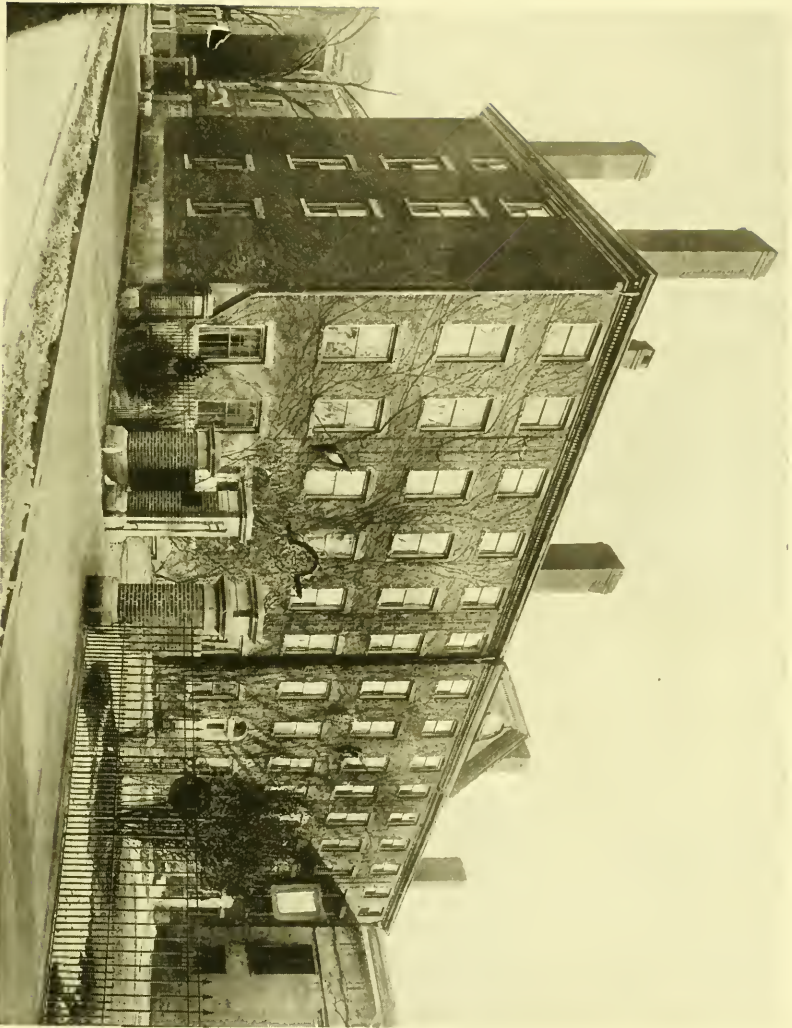
### THE HOPPIN MANSION

*Where President Hayes was entertained when he visited Providence in 1877*

The Presidential salute, fired as the special train bearing Rutherford B. Hayes, Mrs. Hayes, and suite, passed from Massachusetts into Rhode Island, was the State tribute paid to the Chief Executive when he visited Providence on June 28, 1877. The Presidential party had been met at Mansfield by the Rhode Island Legislative Committee, of which Senator P. E. Tillinghast was the chairman. Throngs had gathered all along the way; and to these President Hayes responded from the rear car, as his train moved slowly toward Providence, where General Burnside and the veterans of the Civil War escorted the President to the Hoppin mansion at the northeast corner of Benefit and John Streets.

Governor Van Zandt greeted President Hayes. "It is my privilege," he said, "to welcome you to the State of Rhode Island, to our hospitalities, to our halls, to our homes, and we can only regret that the period of your visit is necessarily so brief that it will not enable us to show you the utilitarian interests of our State, its vast manufactures, its agricultural products, or internal beauties, to which we as Rhode Islanders are so much attached. But, sir, we pray Heaven will crown the days of your stay among us with sunshine, and we will endeavor

*From a photograph*



HOPE COLLEGE



*From a photograph*

#### THE HOPPIN MANSION

to strew it with flowers. I welcome you, sir, in the name of the State, and no words of mine can add anything to the eloquence that you will see in the eyes and read in the faces and hear in the voices of all our men, women, and children as you move along our crowded thoroughfares. I welcome you, sir, most cordially."

"Governor," responded President Hayes, "all of the people of the United States know something of the little State of Rhode Island; something of its past; something of what it is. I am sure that you will understand me when I say that this welcome and this reception are very gratifying to me. Not that I understand it to be on personal accounts, but because Rhode Island believes, as I do, in one of the great sentiments of New England's great statesmen and orators, which I was reminded of at the ancient town of Attleboro. An old citizen of the town handed me a note in which he said that the reason the people of Attleboro turned out to give me a hearty greeting was that the people believed in the sentiment I have alluded to [of Webster], a sentiment which I am sure you will agree with, and one that the Government of the United States should not forget—should always remember: '*We have one country, one constitution, one destiny!*'"





## OLD PROVIDENCE



The mansion at the northeast corner of Benefit and John Streets in which President Hayes was entertained was built about 1833 by Thomas F. Hoppin. A reception followed the arrival of the President, after which Mr. Hayes and his party were taken to a boat for Rocky Point, where a clam-bake had been prepared and where twenty thousand people assembled.

The most magnificent event up to this time which Rhode Island had experienced was the reception given in the evening at the Hoppin mansion. Benefit Street was brilliantly lighted, and the sidewalks and driveways leading to the stately mansion were thronged with people who had gathered to pay their tribute to Mr. and Mrs. Hayes.

On the following day, Friday, June 29, a holiday was proclaimed; and twelve hundred school-children assembled in the Academy of Music, and there gave a concert, which the President and his party attended. The most touching tribute of his visit was paid when, as he was leaving the hall, children from the balcony showered him with roses. Many times afterward President Hayes mentioned this event as one of his pleasantest recollections. General Washington, it will be remembered, had been similarly affected by the children of Providence. After the concert, President Hayes reviewed the Rhode Island militia on the Dexter Training Ground, from which the troops escorted him to the Executive Mansion on the hill.

The Providence-Stonington Company had given the use of their new steamer, the *Massachusetts*, for the trip which President Hayes was to make to Newport. From two to three hundred guests were in the party. As the steamer passed the United States Torpedo Station, a salute was fired, while at the same time the guns from Fort Adams thundered the Presidential salute.

### LANDING OF FRENCH RHODE ISLAND,

*From an old  
Coll. of*



### REINFORCEMENTS IN JULY 11, 1780

*engraving*

*Robert W. Taft*

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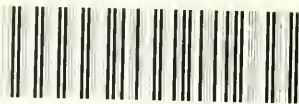
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